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WINDSOR MAGAZINE

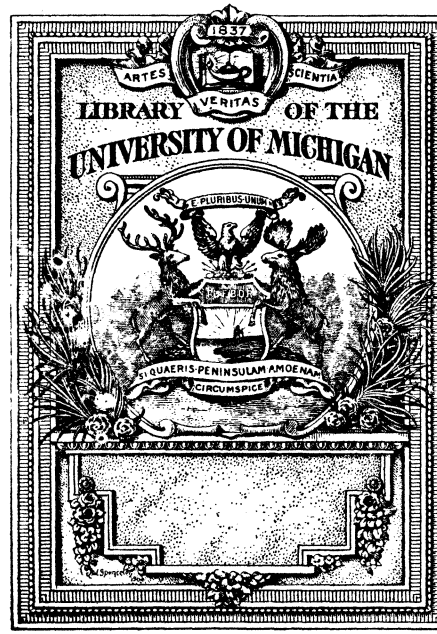
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THE

WINDSOR MAGAZINE

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

FOR

MEN AND WOMEN

VOL. XXX

JUNE TO NOVEMBER 1909

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"JUNE IN THE AUSTRIAN TYROL." BY JOHN MACWHIRTER, R.A.

From the picture in the Chantrey Bequest Collection at the National Gallery of British Art. Reproduced from the large plate published by the Autotype Company, New Oxford Street, W.C.

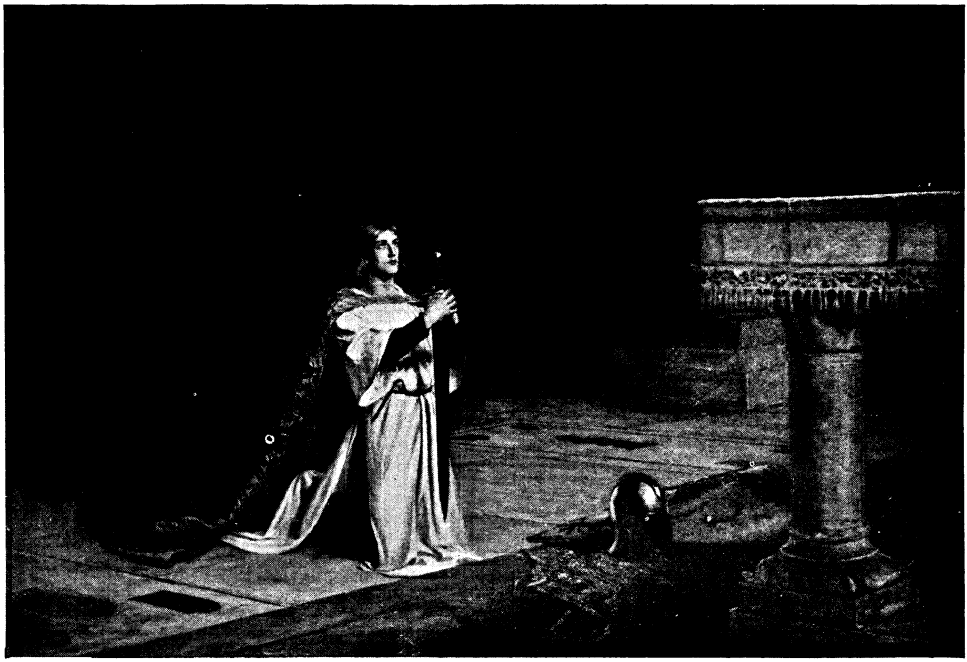


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"THE VIGIL." BY JOHN PETTIE, R.A.

THE CHANTREY BEQUEST.

BY WILFRID MEYNELL.

THE life of Sir Francis Leggatt Chantrey, no less than his Bequest, affords a chapter of surprises. He was born in 1781, near Sheffield, on the bracing borderland of Derbyshire and Yorkshire. His father was a farmer, and also a joiner, so that one supposes that the chisel must have been a familiar instrument in the hands of the boy who came to be regarded by the last generation as "the greatest sculptor England has produced." One of the generally remembered sensations of childhood, one of its solemn moments, is that of the first handling of the real chisel, with its blue blade and its mysterious union of the very sharp edge and very thick shaft. If this weapon of many possibilities cannot be first handled without awe by the general inhabitants of the nursery, the boy who is to carve his own future with it may perhaps be credited with some strange thrill of premonition. We have not the record of any such in Chantrey's case; but we know that in a small dame-school the boy learned his letters, and that, in 1788, writing was first practised by the hand which later used that knowledge to inscribe a last will and testament, little dreaming it would lead to long discussions in the Press, in the Lords Committee Room, in Counsel's Chambers, in the studios and the street.

The boy, when he was sent into Sheffield with his father's milk-cart, sometimes lingered on the road to model figures out of the moist clay. He is next heard of behind the counter of a Sheffield grocer; and his saying comes down: "I would rather carve mirror-frames for Mr. Ramsay"—a calm saying, but "the ear within the ear" can hear behind it the plaintive note, and the hint of that long suppression and bitter boredom undergone by so many youths yoked to an uncongenial destiny. Happily this boy had his heart's desire—a desire enkindled anew each time he saw in Ramsay's shop-window two little wax figures of Faith and Charity. The missing member of the trio was to be found in the heart of the country lad. Hope was

there—blindfold then, and sad, perhaps, as Watts has painted and Coventry Patmore has sung her; but Hope that prospered with time into realisation.

By the time he was twenty-one he had saved £50 with which to cancel his unexpired indentures and be free to follow his bent; and the thrift which accomplished this feat has its bearing no doubt on the later accumulations which have made many a studio happy and have enriched the nation—the individual citizen. Sargent's "Carnation Lily, Lily Rose," Clausen's "At the Gate," Swan's "Prodigal," were bought for us, and for our descendants, in that High Street shop in Sheffield. The future capitalist was as yet a man, not of capital, but of capitals. He went to Dublin, where he got a fever and became bald; to Edinburgh, where he had as little luck in getting employment as he had in Dublin; and then to London, there to stay. He passed into the Royal Academy Schools; he carved in wood for Rogers, generally called "the poet," but better "the wit"; and he exhibited a head of Satan at the Royal Academy of 1808. "I worked at it in a garret," Chantrey explained, "with a paper cap on my head; and, as I could then afford only one candle, I stuck that one in my cap, that it might move along with me and give me light whichever way I turned." The dangers, not less than the ingenuities, strike us now; but Chantrey does not name them. One menace, indeed, he mentions—that of the self-consciousness likely to result from someone's telling him that he resembled Shakespeare—a similitude that reappears through the generations. If Chantrey's portraits—including a bust by his own hand—do him no injustice, one cannot say that the likeness strikes. One would have named as his "double," not Shakespeare, but rather the contemporary Duke of Kent.

A Prebendary's monument in the parish church of Sheffield followed as a commission; and fortunate is the sculptor who gets his



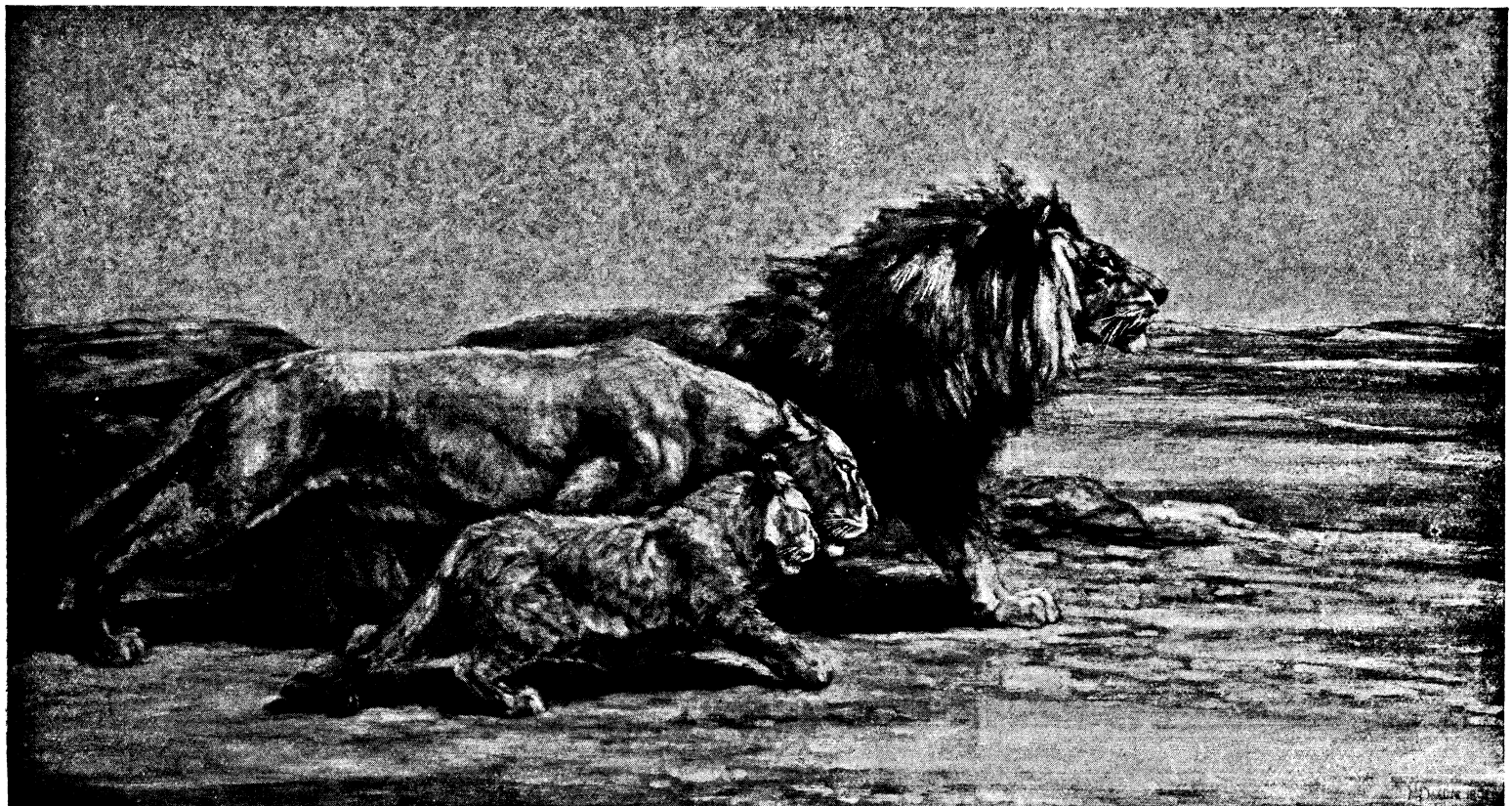
"SPEAK! SPEAK!" BY SIR JOHN E. MILLAIS, P.R.A.

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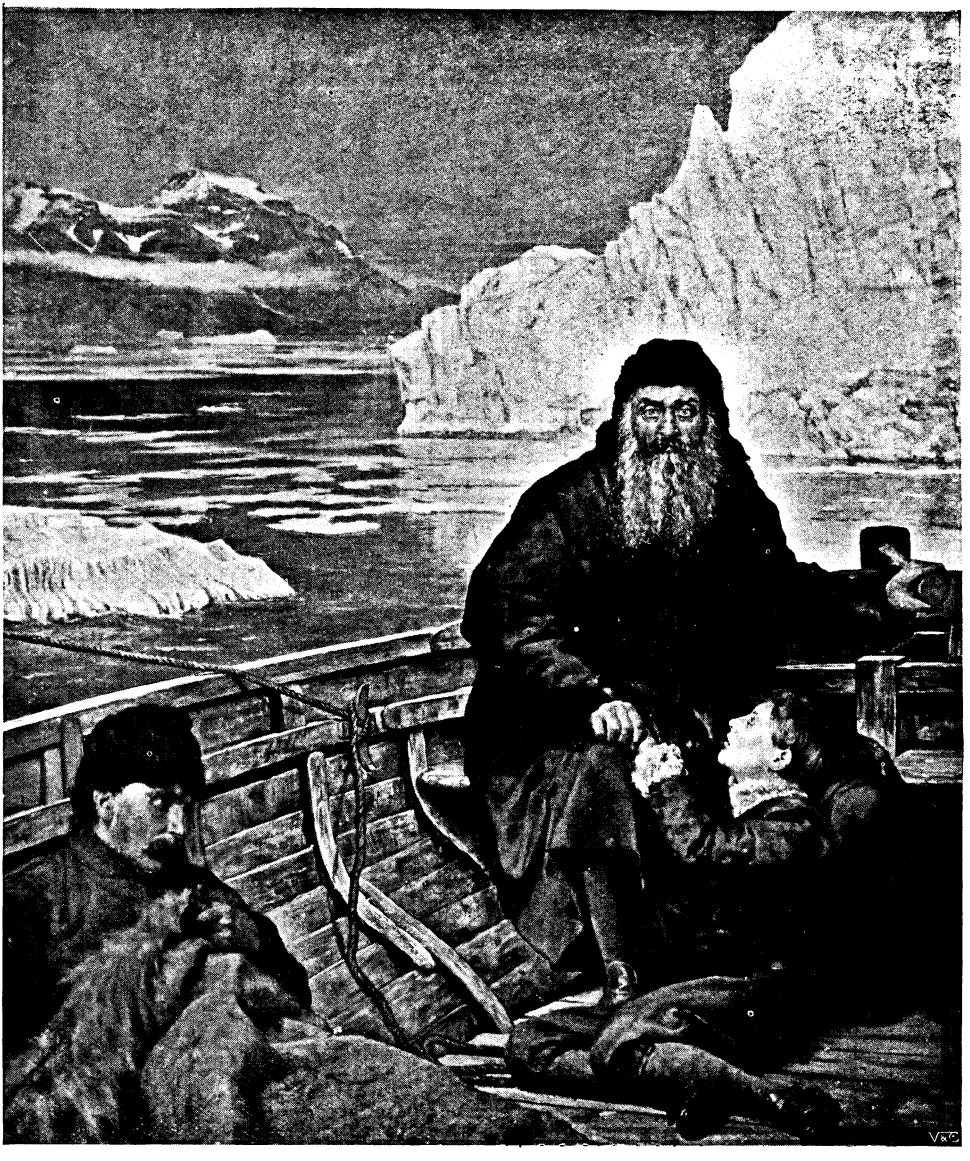
"ALLELUIA!" BY T. C. GOTCH.

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"LIONS." BY HARRY DIXON.

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"THE LAST VOYAGE OF HENRY HUDSON." BY THE HON. JOHN COLLIER.

first recognition from his own people and place. The man of talent who is not without honour save in his own country is a familiar type: his bitter speeches against his own belongings fill pages of biography. Chantrey's happier experience no doubt did something to preserve within him that good nature, that gratitude to the public at large, which later found expression in his Bequest. A commission for colossal busts of four Admirals for Greenwich Hospital and Trinity House gave him metropolitan fame; and a bust of Horne Tooke, followed by £12,000 worth of commissions, gave him what he needed even more—money. Fame and money began to step out together; his charge of one hundred guineas for a bust rose to two hundred; and for George IV. he got three hundred—an addition of one hundred, so runs a story for the credulous, being volunteered by the King. This was the time when Nollekens had one of his own busts removed from the Academy to make room for one of Chantrey's, and when he had the formula: "If you want a



"COLT-HUNTING IN THE NEW FOREST." BY LUCY KEMP-WELCH.

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"RETURNING TO THE FOLD." BY H. W. B. DAVIS.

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bust, Chantrey's the man." These accredited instances of good nature are a part of the nation's heritage; very literally so, for, here again, be sure that the uncovenanted kindnesses received by this sculptor from the provinces went to the making of his mind and of his legacy. Sorrow is commonly spoken of as a good school; but the observer of life knows very well that prosperity is generally a better.

Luck came to Chantrey with his marriage, too, in 1811, for he wedded at once a cousin and £10,000. Little things went against the grain, to be sure; for instance, the production of his statues in metal rather than in marble. But he was not allowed to boycott bronze completely, and his George IV. for Trafalgar Square and his Wellington for the front of the Royal Exchange were cast at a foundry of his own in Pimlico, not far from his own dwelling. Other statues of his with which Londoners became as familiar as they are with the controversies that now envelop his name, are his Pitt in Hanover Square, his Watt in Westminster Abbey; and nearly everybody has seen reproduced, in some form or other, his Washington, his Canning, his Walter Scott.

Two visits to Paris—one of them in the exciting year 1815—were paid by Chantrey; and a turn in Italy, in the company of Jackson, a fellow-Yorkshireman and Academician, and a portrait painter of as yet inadequately recognised distinction, took him to the Vatican and other sculpture galleries and made him personally acquainted with Canova and Thorvaldsen. Indeed, at parting, Chantrey and Canova exchanged cloaks. A modern traveller in Italy, caught into its seventh heavens, loving its atmosphere, its people, its religion, its art, found that she had to preserve her loyalty to her own Northern land by repeating, as she went about, the names, "Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats." Chantrey did not need these for a talisman. When he went to the Quirinal, he found no pictures that pleased him so well as Sir Thomas



"BETWEEN TWO FIRES." BY F. D. MILLET.

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"CROMWELL AT DUNBAR." BY A. C. GOW, R.A.

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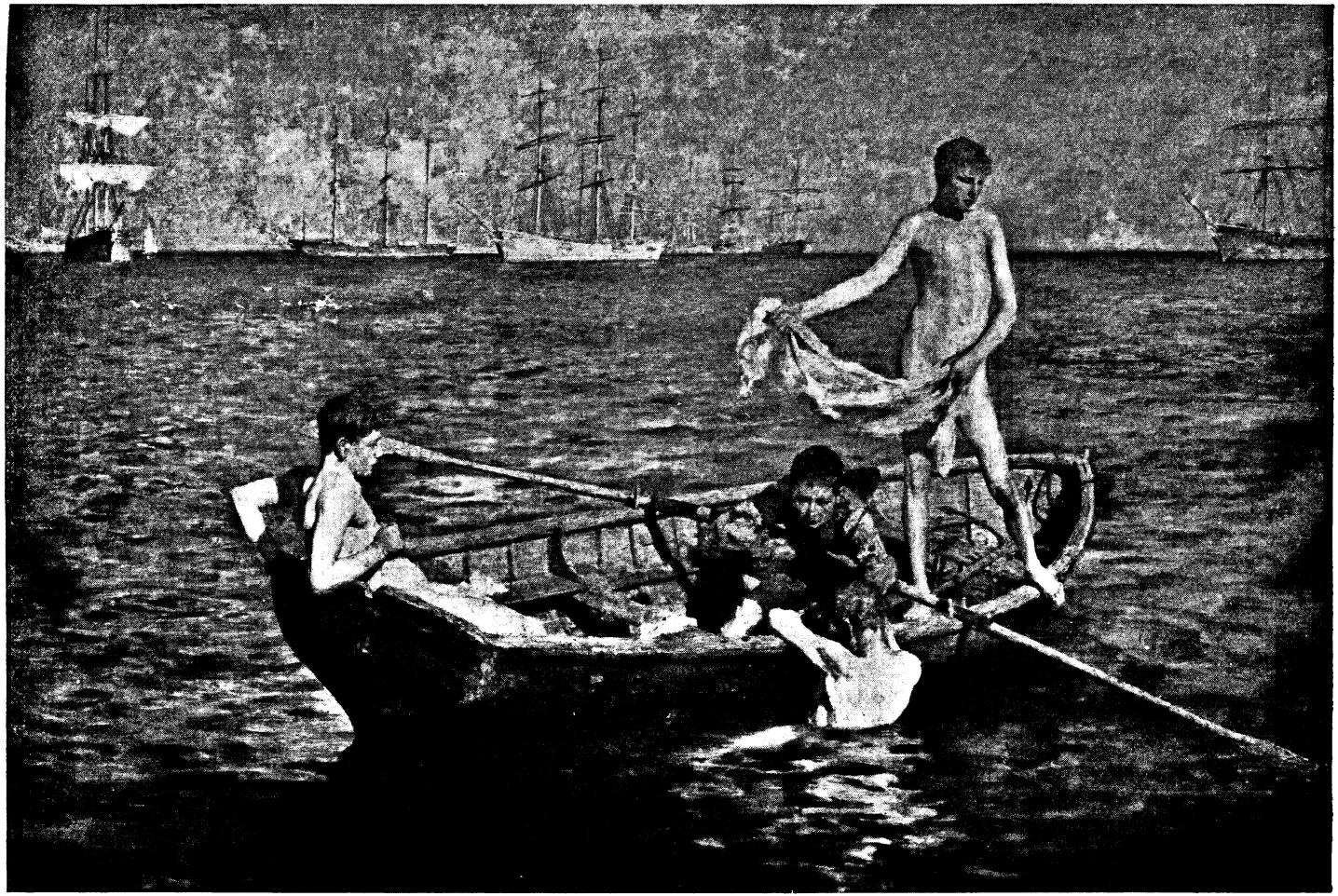


"CARNATION LILY, LILY ROSE." BY JOHN SARGENT.

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Lawrence's portraits of the Pope and of Cardinal Gonsalvi. We get a glimpse of the patriot rather than of the man of fine taste. Later the patriot made the famous Bequest; and if there has been an hereditary lack of finality in judgment in some of the purchases made by Chantrey's trustees, let the "one-man" men who distrust committees remark that we are not sure that the generous donor himself would have escaped mistakes. Chantrey himself did many sketches. He painted portraits in early life; and, what is more to the point, Constable says in a letter dated 1826: "Chantrey loves painting and is always upstairs. He works now and then on my pictures."

Even in those early days there was an outcry against the Royal Academy; Chantrey himself had been very much its critic and opponent in the days prior to his election as an Associate in 1816, to full membership only two years later. In 1837, the first year of the Victorian Era, he received an additional mark of trust—being elected to be a trustee and auditor. His friendship with fellow-Academicians, artists ranging



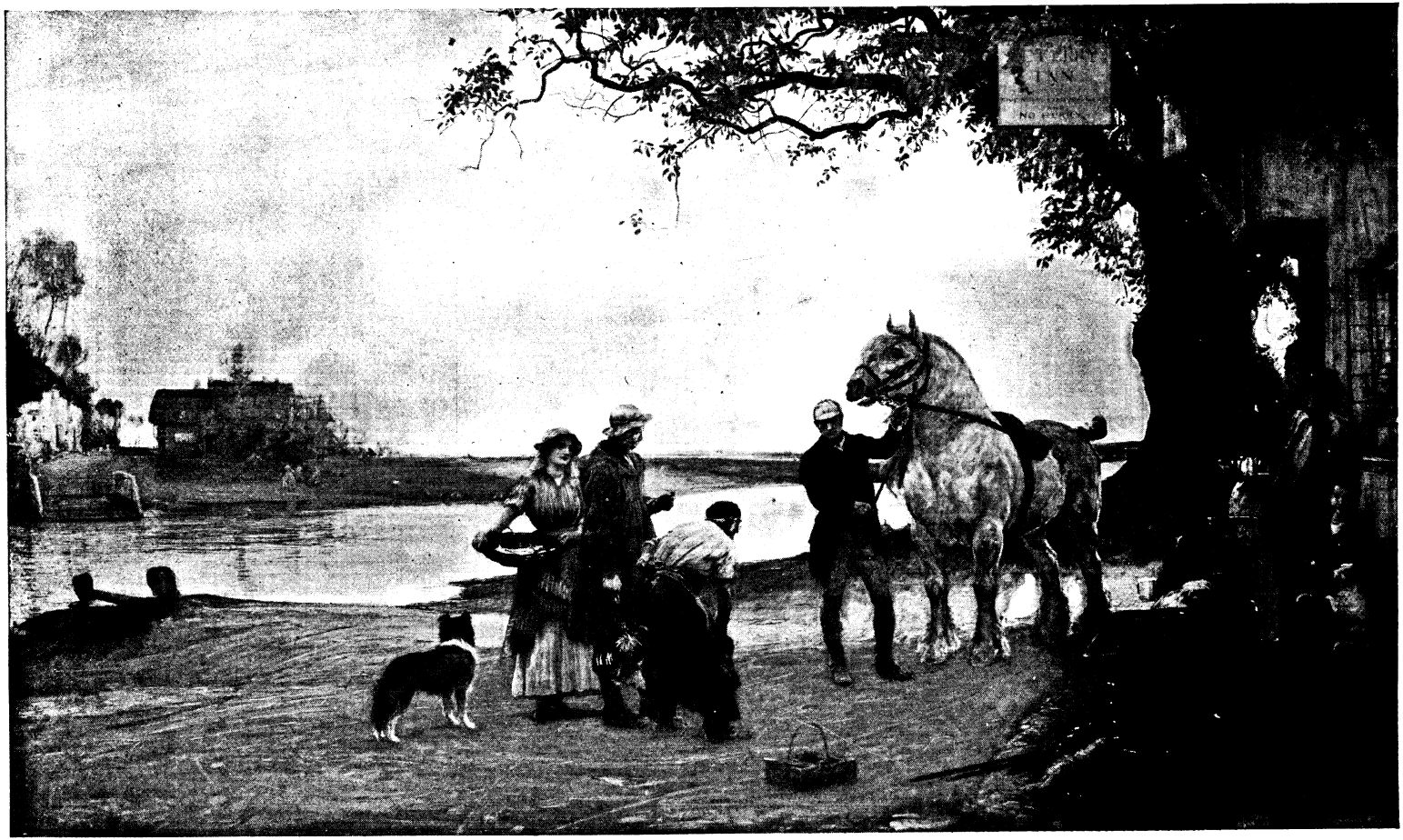
"AUGUST BLUE." BY H. S. TUKE.

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from Constable to Benjamin West, from Jackson to Jones, from Turner to Mulready, linked him more closely to the institution that he was to benefit in the future. Northcote was so far an admirer of Chantrey that he left money for a monument of himself to be executed by Chantrey. The time for Chantrey's own monument came in 1841. He returned from Norwich, where he had superintended the erection of his statue of Bishop Bathurst in the Cathedral there, to find himself feeling ill; and while he was walking near Buckingham Palace one evening he was seized with acute sickness, and got home only in time to die—"from a spasm of the heart," the coroner recorded. The coffin-plate bore the bare inscription: "Sir Francis Chantrey, R.A. Died November 25, 1841, aged sixty years."

Such, in brief, is the history of Chantrey's life: with an accent on those events, ties, and kindlinesses which bear, to some extent, on his intentions—nowadays often in dispute—when he made his will, and on the interpretation, still more loudly challenged, given to it by his trustees. By the terms of that will Sir Francis left a sum which yields a noble income of between £2,000 and £3,000 a year to be expended on forming a collection of the best works in painting and sculpture "executed within the shores of Great Britain" by artists, English or foreign, living or dead. The Council of the Royal Academy has to choose such works; and to the President, in reward of his labours (so that labours were contemplated, many parleyings with persons of importance, and a journey here or there, we may presume), was left an annual stipend of £300, and to the secretary a like stipend of £50. The purchased works were to be publicly exhibited for at least a month "in the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy or in some important exhibition of Fine Arts"—a condition the Tate Gallery itself now fulfils. For time has brought to pass the thing Chantrey desired when he wrote: "And it is my wish and intention that the works of art so purchased shall be collected for the purpose of forming and establishing a public National Collection of British Fine Art, in the confident expectation that, whenever the collection shall become or be considered of sufficient importance, the Government of the country will provide a suitable or proper building for their preservation and exhibition as the property of the nation, free of all charges whatever on my estate." The one further and governing condition remains to be stated: "And my will further is that, in making such purchases, preference shall, on all occasions, be given to works of the highest merit that can be obtained, and that the prices to be obtained for the same shall be liberal; . . . and my will further is that such President and Council, in making their decision, shall have regard solely to the intrinsic merit of the work in question, and not permit any feeling of sympathy for an artist or his family, by reason of his or their circumstances or otherwise, to influence them." For the rest, the income need not be expended in any given year, if "works of the highest merit" are not on sale, but can be accumulated for five years together, if need be.

The terms of the will, under which the citizen is made every year a "patron" of the arts, are, therefore, very plain. Only one point has been in legal dispute—whether a commission can be given, beforehand, to a sculptor for a bronze cast of his clay model. The Courts said "No"; and Chantrey's dislike of the metal, along with the words of the will, may well be quoted in support. In practice, the rule which allows the purchase of works by dead masters has been practically a dead letter—Hilton's "Christ Crowned with Thorns," and Chantrey's own portrait being the sole acquisitions under this head. The rule that allows earlier pictures by living artists to be acquired has also gone into desuetude. A dead letter has been the rule that the works of foreign artists may be acquired; dead, save in the case of one artist, American born, and not naturalised, though resident in England. The freedom to buy works executed in past years has been practically a dead letter, and the injunction that no personal claims should be considered by the purchasers, but only the supremacy of the picture, has been observed only if the exhibitor at the Academy is the acknowledged master; for to him has gone almost the entire £60,000 already expended since the funds left by Chantrey, subject to a certain life-interest, became available. The Academicians naturally have their preferences; they are Burlington House patriots. Many artists who have chosen to be absentees from the Academy suffer exclusion from the National Gallery of British Art in consequence, and among foreigners painting in England, Boldini has been ignored, so has Mancini, so has Monet. The questions which yearly come under debate are important to both sides—the Academy Council on the one hand, and the whole body of educated artistic opinion on the other. The Lords Committee, moved for by Lord Lytton, became inevitable; and



"THE CAST SHOE." BY R. W. MACBETH, R.A.

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as such was accepted by the Government, with just a touch of the regret that banqueters at a hospitable board are calculated to feel and, if they can, to act upon.

Meanwhile there is the pleasant task of thanking the President and Council of the Royal Academy for purchases all agree to be good. There are treasures at Millbank—no doubt of that. A few notes in passing are all that we may allow ourselves. Lord Leighton's "Athlete Struggling with a Python" dates back to 1877, and the £2,000 paid for it secured a bronze that is eloquent of one of the most attracting personalities of his day. Onslow Ford's "Folly," Mr. Goscombe John's "Boy at Play," Mr. Colton's "Girdle," his "Springtide of Life," Mr. Pegram's "Ignis Fatuus," Mr. Thornycroft's "Teucer," are also there to represent the sculpture of the later Victorian Era, but there is, unhappily, no Gilbert or Frampton.

At the Tate Gallery, too, Mr. J. M. Swan appears only as a painter; and his "Prodigal Son" beckons to us from the walls as one of the very few works the collection holds from the hand of a colorist.

To the great name of Millais, the Chantrey Purchasers will some day, we hope, be able to do the justice of adding to this collection one of those Pre-Raphaelite pictures of his which come from time to time into the market, assuring the world that it did possess in the early Victorian days a very great painter. The "Speak! Speak!" at the Tate Gallery is not interesting by any qualities of dramatic expression or of creation. Such an example suggests that a picture has sometimes been bought by the Council, not for the sake of the picture, but for the sake of the artist's name. Far more interesting, if quite as risky, is the contrary impulse which has led to the purchase of works which, painted by men almost unknown, had a sudden vogue. They seemed, as some authors do, to have made a hit which was likely to leave its mark.

Of some of the younger painters the Fund has availed itself twice over. Mr. Henry Tuke, A.R.A., has his "All Hands to the Pumps!" and his "August Blue"; Mr. Adrian Stokes his "Upland and Sky" and his "August in the Mountains."

The best tribute that can be paid to the charm and quality of a proportion of the Chantrey Bequest pictures is to be found in the unwillingness of the visitor to leave them. Once at Millbank, he wishes to remain their prisoner, and, like the parting lover in Christina Rossetti's poem, "half turns to go, yet, turning, stays." To catch a last look at Mr. J. J. Shannon's "Flower Girl" is to return again to admire its masterly qualities of life and beauty. The opportunity to get such a picture was unique, and the Purchasers took it. This picture might be put in evidence, with the La Thangue, the Arnesby Brown, the Aumonier, and others of which space forbids the mention, if ever an attempt should be made to alienate this Chantrey endowment even as endowments of another sort have been alienated throughout the land.

Nor may the visitor leave without a feeling of gratitude towards his host at the Tate Gallery, for there is no collection in Europe more admirably displayed. The Curator, Mr. D. S. MacColl, in the hanging and grouping of the canvases, so helps the sight-seer to appreciate and appraise the pictures at their true worth, that the "art headache," of which there is a yearly epidemic at Burlington House, is unknown at Millbank.

The selection of pictures here reproduced has been governed partly by the fact that many of the Chantrey purchases have but lately been seen in these pages in the series of articles on the work of their respective artists. That series has already included the Chantrey pictures of Sir William Q. Orchardson, Mr. Frank Dicksee, Mr. W. F. Yeames, Mr. Seymour Lucas, and of such younger artists as Mr. Frank Bramley, Mr. Ralph Peacock, Mr. Frank Craig, and Mr. Leonard Campbell Taylor, and others are in preparation for future numbers.

LILAC.

UPON my shuddering belfry of emerald leaves,
Full high above the dimness of the lawn,
Are set my chimes of passion's royal shade,
Roped with the rainbowed ribbons of the dawn.

When night's quiet feet are swift upon the hills,
Her sombre garments folded in the dells,
From out the dark the lady moon puts forth
Pale silver hands and rings my jewelled bells.

ARCHIBALD SULLIVAN.

THE HOUSE OF MAPUHI.

By JACK LONDON.

DESPITE the heavy clumsiness of her lines, the *Aorai* handled easily in the light breeze, and her captain ran her well in before he hove-to just outside the suck of the surf. The atoll of Hikueru lay low on the water—a circle of pounded coral sand a hundred yards wide, twenty miles in circumference, and from three to five feet above high-water mark. On the bottom of the huge and glassy lagoon was much pearl shell, and from the deck of the schooner, across the slender ring of the atoll, the divers could be seen at work. But the lagoon had no entrance for even a trading schooner. With a favouring breeze, cutters could win in through the tortuous and shallow channel, but the schooners lay off and on outside, and sent in their small boats.

The *Aorai* swung out a boat smartly, into which sprang half-a-dozen brown-skinned sailors clad only in scarlet loin-cloths. They took the oars, while in the stern-sheets, at the steering sweep, stood a young man garbed in the tropic white that marks the European. But he was not all European. The golden strain of Polynesia betrayed itself in the sun-gilt of his fair skin, and cast up golden sheens and lights through the glimmering blue of his eyes. Raoul he was, Alexandre Raoul, youngest son of Marie Raoul, the wealthy quarter-caste who owned and managed half-a-dozen trading schooners similar to the *Aorai*. Across an eddy just outside the entrance, and in and through and over a boiling tide-rip, the boat fought its way to the mirrored calm of the lagoon. Young Raoul leaped out upon the white sand and shook hands with a tall native. The man's chest and shoulders were magnificent, but the stump of a right arm, beyond the flesh of which the age-whitened bone projected several inches, attested the encounter with a shark that had put an end to his diving days, and made him a fawner and an intriguer for small favours.

"Have you heard, Alec?" were his first words. "Mapuhi has found a pearl—such a pearl! Never was there one like it ever fished up in Hikueru, nor in all the Paumotus, nor in all the world. Buy it from him. He has it now. And remember that I told you first. He is a fool, and you can get it cheap. Have you any tobacco?"

Straight up the beach to a shack under a pandanus tree Raoul headed. He was his mother's supercargo, and his business was to comb all the Paumotus for the wealth of copra, shell, and pearls that they yielded up.

He was a young supercargo—it was his second voyage in such capacity—and he suffered much secret worry from his lack of experience in pricing pearls. But when Mapuhi exposed the pearl to his sight, he managed to suppress the startle it gave him, and to maintain a careless, commercial expression on his face. For the pearl had struck him a blow. It was large as a pigeon egg, a perfect sphere, of a whiteness that reflected opalescent lights from all colours about it. It was alive! Never had he seen anything like it. When Mapuhi dropped it into his hand, he was surprised by the weight of it. That showed that it was a good pearl. He examined it closely through a pocket magnifying-glass. It was without flaw or blemish. The purity of it seemed almost to melt into the atmosphere out of his hand. In the shade it was softly luminous, gleaming like a tender moon. So translucently white was it that when he dropped it into a glass of water, he had difficulty in finding it. So straight and swiftly had it sunk to bottom that he knew its weight was excellent.

"Well, what do you want for it?" he asked, with a fine assumption of nonchalance.

"I want——" Mapuhi began; and behind him, framing his own dark face, the dark faces of two women and a girl nodded concurrence in what he wanted. Their heads were bent forward, they were animated by a suppressed eagerness, their eyes flashed avariciously.

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"I want a house," Mapuhi went on. "It must have a roof of galvanized iron and an octagon drop-clock. It must be six fathoms long, with a porch all around. A big room must be in the centre, with a round table in the middle of it, and that octagon drop-clock on the wall. There must be four bedrooms, two on each side of the big room, and in each bedroom must be an iron bed, two chairs, and a washstand. And back of the house must be a kitchen, a good kitchen, with pots and pans and a stove. And you must build the house on my island, which is Fakarava."

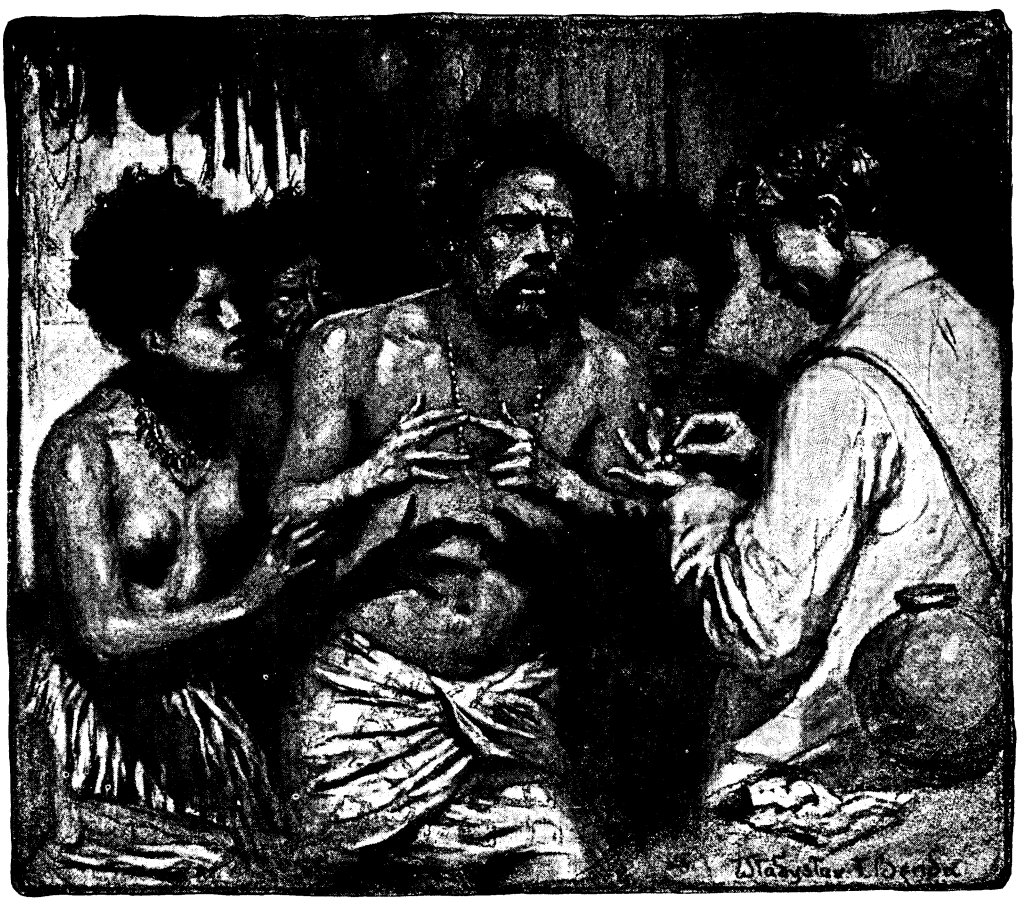
"Is that all?" Raoul asked incredulously.

"There must be a sewing machine," spoke up Tefara, Mapuhi's wife.

"Not forgetting the octagon drop-clock," added Nauri, Mapuhi's mother.

"Yes, that is all," said Mapuhi.

Young Raoul laughed—he laughed long and heartily—but while he laughed, he secretly performed problems in mental arithmetic. He had never built a house in his life, and his notions concerning house-building were hazy. While he laughed, he calculated the cost of the voyage to Tahiti for materials, of the materials themselves, of the voyage back again to Fakarava, and the cost of landing the materials and of building the house. It would come to four thousand French dollars, allowing a margin for safety. Four thousand French dollars were equivalent to twenty thousand francs. It was impossible. How was he to know the value of such a pearl? Twenty thousand francs was a lot of money—and of his mother's money at that.



"'I want a house.'"

"Mapuhi," he said, "you are a big fool. Set a money price."

But Mapuhi shook his head, and the three heads behind him shook with his.

"I want the house," he said. "It must be six fathoms long, with a porch all around——"

"Yes, yes," Raoul interrupted, "I know all about your house; but it won't do. I'll give you a thousand Chili dollars."

The four heads chorused a silent negative.

"And a hundred Chili dollars in trade."

"I want the house," Mapuhi began.

"What good will the house do you?" Raoul demanded. "The first hurricane that comes along will wash it away. You ought to know. Captain Raffy says it looks like a hurricane right now."

"Not on Fakarava," said Mapuhi; "the land is much higher there. On this island, yes; any hurricane can sweep Hikueru. I will have the house on Fakarava. It must be six fathoms long, with a porch all around——"

And Raoul listened again to the tale of the house. Several hours he spent in the endeavour to hammer the house-obsession out of Mapuhi's mind; but Mapuhi's mother and wife, and Ngakura, Mapuhi's daughter, bolstered him in his resolve for the house. Through the open doorway, while he listened for the twentieth time to the detailed description of the house that was wanted, Raoul saw his schooner's second boat draw up on the beach. The sailors rested on the oars, advertising haste to be gone. The first mate of the *Aorai* sprang ashore, exchanged a word with the one-armed native, then hurried towards Raoul. The day grew suddenly dark as a squall obscured the face of the sun. Across the lagoon Raoul could see approaching the ominous line of the puff of wind.

"Captain Raffy says you've got to get outa here," was the mate's greeting. "If there's any shell, we've got to run the risk of picking it up later on, so he says. The barometer's dropped to twenty-nine—seventy."

The gust of wind struck the pandanus tree overhead, and tore through the palms beyond, flinging half-a-dozen ripe cocoanuts, with heavy thuds, to the ground. Then came the rain out of the distance, advancing with the roar of a gale of wind and causing the water of the lagoon to smoke in driven windrows. The sharp rattle of the first drops were on the leaves when Raoul sprang to his feet.

"A thousand Chili dollars, cash down, Mapuhi," he said, "and two hundred Chili dollars in trade."

"I want a house——" the other began.

"Mapuhi," Raoul yelled, in order to make himself heard, "you are a fool!"

He flung out of the house and, side by side with the mate, fought his way down the beach towards the boat. They could not see the boat. The tropic rain sheeted about them so that they could see only the beach under their feet and the spiteful little waves from the lagoon that snapped and bit at the sand. A figure appeared through the deluge. It was Huru-Huru, the man with the one arm.

"Did you get the pearl?" he yelled in Raoul's ear.

"Mapuhi is a fool!" was the answering yell, and the next moment they were lost to each other in the descending water.

Half an hour later, Huru-Huru, watching from the seaward side of the atoll, saw the two boats hoisted in, and the *Aorai* pointing her nose out to sea. And near her, just come in from the sea on the wings of the squall, he saw another schooner hove-to and dropping a boat into the water. He knew her. She was the *Orohena*, owned by Toriki, the half-caste trader, who served as his own supercargo, and who doubtlessly was even then in the stern-sheets of the boat. Huru-Huru chuckled. He knew that Mapuhi owed Toriki for trade goods advanced the year before.

The squall had passed. The hot sun was blazing down, and the lagoon was once more a mirror. But the air was sticky, like mucilage, and the weight of it seemed to burden the lungs and make breathing difficult.

"Have you heard the news, Toriki?" Huru-Huru asked. "Mapuhi has found a pearl. Never was there a pearl like it ever fished up in Hikueru, nor anywhere in the Paumotus, nor anywhere in all the world. Mapuhi is a fool. Besides, he owes you money. Remember that I told you first. Have you any tobacco?"

And to the grass-shack of Mapuhi went Toriki. He was a masterful man, withal a fairly stupid one. Carelessly he glanced at the wonderful pearl—glanced for a moment only—and carelessly he dropped it into his pocket.

"You are lucky," he said. "It is a nice pearl. I will give you credit on the books."

"I want a house," Mapuhi began in consternation. "It must be six fathoms——"

"Six fathoms your grandmother!" was the trader's retort. "You want to pay up your debts, that's what you want. You owed me twelve hundred dollars Chili. Very

well ; you owe them no longer. The amount is squared. Besides, I will give you credit for two hundred Chili. If, when I get to Tahiti, the pearl sells well, I will give you credit for another hundred—that will make three hundred—but, mind, only if the pearl sells well. I may even lose money on it."

Mapuhi folded his arms in sorrow and sat with bowed head. He had been robbed of his pearl. In place of the house, he had paid up a debt. There was nothing to show for the pearl.

"You are a fool!" said Tefara.

"You are a fool!" said Nauri, his mother. "Why did you let the pearl into his hand?"

"What was I to do?" Mapuhi protested. "I owed him the money. He knew I had the pearl. You heard him yourself ask to see it. I had not told him; he knew. Somebody else told him. And I owed him the money."

"Mapuhi is a fool!" mimicked Ngakura.

She was twelve years old and did not know any better. Mapuhi relieved his feelings by sending her reeling from a box on the ear, while Tefara and Nauri burst into tears and continued to upbraid him, after the manner of women.

Huru-Huru, watching on the beach, saw a third schooner that he knew heave-to outside the entrance and drop a boat. It was the *Hira*, well named, for she was owned by Levy, the German Jew, the greatest pearl-buyer of them all, and, as was well known, Hira was the Tahitian god of fishermen and thieves.

"Have you heard the news?" Huru-Huru asked, as Levy, a fat man with massive, asymmetrical features, stepped out upon the beach. "Mapuhi has found a pearl. There was never a pearl like it in Hikueru, in all the Paumotus, in all the world. Mapuhi is a fool. He has sold it to Toriki for fourteen hundred Chili—I listened outside and heard. Toriki is likewise a fool. You can buy it from him cheap. Remember that I told you first. Have you any tobacco?"

"Where is Toriki?"

"In the house of Captain Lynch, drinking absinth. He has been there an hour."

And while Levy and Toriki drank absinth and chaffered over the pearl, Huru-Huru listened outside and heard the stupendous price of twenty-five thousand francs agreed upon.

It was at this time that both the *Orohena* and the *Hira*, running in close to the shore, began firing guns and signalling frantically. The three men stepped outside in time to see the two schooners go hastily about and head off shore, dropping mainsails and flying-jibs on the run in the teeth of the squall that heeled them far over on the whitened water. Then the rain blotted them out.

"They'll be back after it's over," said Toriki. "We'd better be getting out of here."

"I reckon the glass has fallen some more," said Captain Lynch.

He was a white-bearded sea-captain, too old for service, who had learned that the only way to live on comfortable terms with his asthma was on Hikueru. He went inside to look at the barometer.

They heard him exclaim, and rushed in to join with him at staring at a dial which marked twenty-nine—twenty.

Again they came out, this time anxiously to consult sea and sky. The squall had cleared away, but the sky remained overcast. The two schooners, under all sail and joined by a third, could be seen making back. A veer in the wind induced them to slack off sheets, and five minutes afterwards a sudden veer from the opposite quarter caught all three schooners aback, and those on shore could see the boom-tackles being slacked away or cast off on the jump. The sound of the surf was loud, hollow, and menacing, and a heavy swell was setting in. A terrible sheet of lightning burst before their eyes, illuminating the dark day, and the thunder rolled wildly about them.

Toriki and Levy broke into a run for their boats, the latter ambling along like a panic-stricken hippopotamus. As their two boats swept out the entrance, they passed the boat of the *Aorai* coming in. In the stern-sheets, encouraging the rowers, was Raoul. Unable to shake the vision of the pearl from his mind, he was returning to accept Mapuhi's price of a house.

He landed on the beach in the midst of a driving thunder-squall that was so dense that he collided with Huru-Huru before he saw him.

"Too late!" yelled Huru-Huru. "Mapuhi sold it to Toriki for fourteen hundred Chili, and Toriki sold it to Levy for twenty-five thousand francs, and Levy will sell it in France for a hundred thousand francs! Have you any tobacco?"

Raoul felt relieved; his troubles about the pearl were over. He need not worry any more, even if he had not got the pearl. But he did not believe Huru-Huru. Mapuhi might well have sold it for fourteen hundred

Chili, but that Levy, who knew pearls, should have paid twenty-five thousand francs was too wide a stretch. Raoul decided to interview Captain Lynch on the subject; but when he arrived at that ancient mariner's house, he found him looking wide-eyed at the barometer.

"What do you read it?" Captain Lynch asked anxiously, rubbing his spectacles and staring again at the instrument.

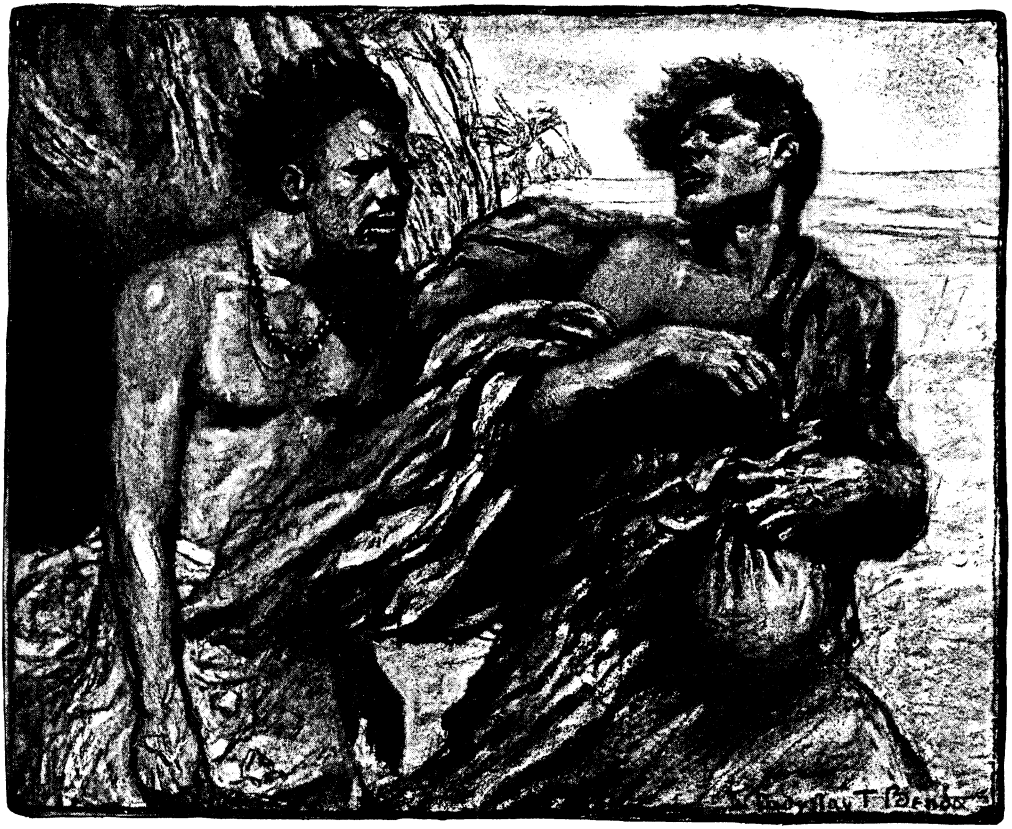
"Twenty-nine—ten," said Raoul. "I have never seen it so low before."

One of the sailors from the boat pointed at the mouth of the passage and shook his head. Raoul looked and saw a white anarchy of foam and surge.

"I guess I'll stay with you to-night, captain," he said; then turned to the sailor and told him to haul the boat out and to find shelter for himself and fellows.

"Twenty-nine flat," Captain Lynch reported, coming out from another look at the barometer, a chair in his hand.

He sat down and stared at the spectacle of



"'Mind, only if the pearl sells well.'"

"I should say not!" snorted the captain. "Fifty years, boy and man, on all the seas, and I've never seen it go down to that. Listen!"

They stood for a moment, while the surf rumbled and shook the house, then they went outside. The squall had passed. They could see the *Aorai* lying becalmed a mile away, and pitching and tossing madly in the tremendous seas that rolled in stately procession down out of the north-east and flung themselves furiously upon the coral shore. the sea. The sun came out, increasing the sultriness of the day, while the dead calm still held. The seas continued to increase in magnitude.

"What makes that sea is what gets me," Raoul muttered petulantly. "There is no wind, yet look at it—look at that fellow there!"

Miles in length, carrying tens of thousands of tons in weight, its impact shook the frail atoll like an earthquake. Captain Lynch was startled.

"Gracious!" he exclaimed, half rising from his chair, then sinking back.

"But there is no wind." Raoul persisted. "I could understand it if there was wind along with it."

"You'll get the wind soon enough without worryin' for it," was the grim reply.

The two men sat on in silence. The sweat stood out on their skin in myriads of tiny drops that ran together, forming blotches of moisture, which, in turn, coalesced into rivulets that dripped to the ground. They panted for breath, the old man's efforts being especially painful. A sea swept up the beach, licking around the trunks of the cocoanuts and subsiding almost at their feet.

"'Way past high-water mark," Captain Lynch remarked; "and I've been here eleven years." He looked at his watch. "It is three o'clock."

A man and woman, at their heels a motley following of brats and curs, trailed disconsolately by. They came to a halt beyond the house and, after much irresolution, sat down in the sand. A few minutes later another family trailed in from the opposite direction, the man and woman carrying a heterogeneous assortment of possessions. And soon several hundred persons of all ages and sexes were congregated about the captain's dwelling. He called to one new arrival, a woman with a nursing babe in her arms, and in answer received the information that her house had just been swept into the lagoon.

This was the highest spot of land for miles, and already, in many places on either hand, the great seas were making a clean breach of the slender ring of the atoll and surging into the lagoon. Twenty miles around stretched the ring of the atoll, and in no place was it more than fifty fathoms wide. It was the height of the diving season, and from all the islands around, even as far as Tahiti, the natives had gathered.

"There are twelve hundred men, women, and children here," said Captain Lynch. "I wonder how many will be here to-morrow morning."

"But why don't it blow? That's what I want to know," Raoul demanded.

"Don't worry, young man, don't worry; you'll get your troubles fast enough."

Even as Captain Lynch spoke, a great, watery mass smote the atoll. The sea-water churned about them three inches deep under their chairs. A low wail of fear went up from the many women. The children, with clasped hand, stared at the immense rollers and cried piteously. Chickens and cats, wading perturbedly in the water, as by common consent, with flight and scramble, took refuge on the roof of the captain's house. A Paumotan, with a litter of new-born puppies in a basket, climbed into a cocoanut tree and, twenty feet above the ground, made the basket fast. The mother floundered about in the water beneath, whining and yelping.

And still the sun shone brightly and the dead calm continued. They sat and watched the seas and the insane pitching of the *Aorai*. Captain Lynch gazed at the huge mountains of water sweeping in until he could gaze no more. He covered his face with his hands to shut out the sight, then went into the house.

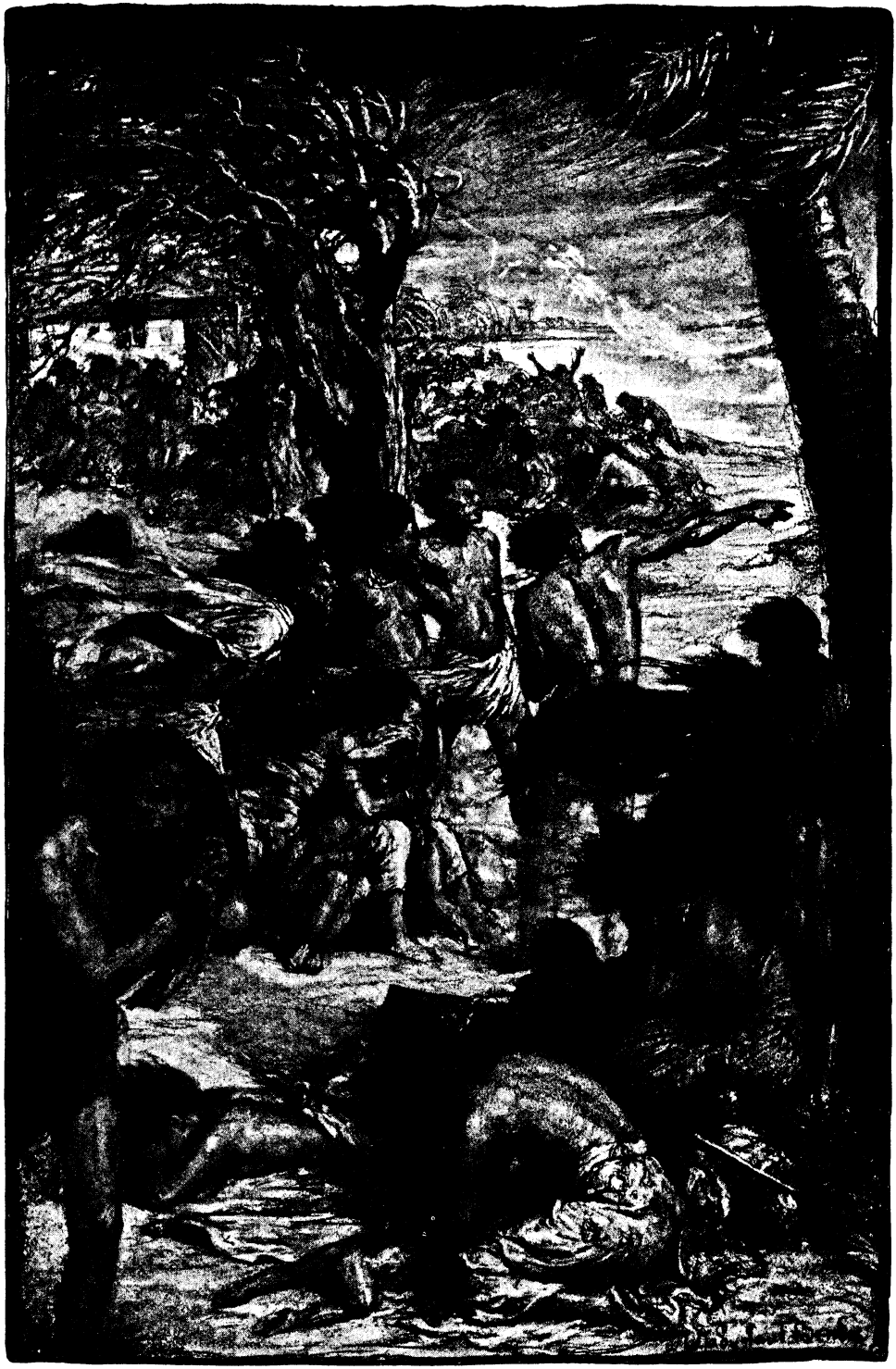
"Twenty-eight—sixty," he said quietly when he returned.

In his arm was a coil of rope. He cut it into two-fathom lengths, giving one to Raoul, retaining one for himself, and distributing the remainder among the women, with the advice to pick out a tree and climb.

A light air began to blow out of the north-east, and the fan of it on his cheek seemed to cheer Raoul up. He could see the *Aorai* trimming her sheets and heading off shore, and he regretted that he was not on her. She would get away, at any rate; but as for the atoll—— A sea breached across, almost sweeping him off his feet, and he selected a tree. Then he remembered the barometer and ran back to the house. He encountered Captain Lynch on the same errand, and together they went in.

"Twenty-eight—twenty," said the old mariner. "It's going to be appalling around here! What was that?"

The air seemed filled with the rush of something. The house quivered and vibrated, and they heard the thrumming of a mighty note of sound. The windows rattled, two panes crashed; a draught of wind tore in, striking them and making them stagger. The door opposite banged shut, shattering the latch. The white door-knob crumbled in fragments to the floor. Then came a new sound like the rattle of musketry, as the spray from a sea struck the wall of the house. Captain Lynch looked at his watch. It was four o'clock. He put on a coat of pilot cloth, unhooked the barometer and stowed it away in a capacious pocket. Again a sea struck the house with a heavy thud, and the light building tilted, twisted quarter around on its foundation, and sank down, its floor at an angle of ten degrees.



"Several hundred persons of all ages and sexes were congregated about the captain's dwelling."

Raoul went out first. The wind caught him and whirled him away. He noted that it had hauled around to the east. With a great effort, he threw himself down on the sand, crouching and holding his own. Captain Lynch, driven like a wisp of straw, sprawled over him. Two of the *Aorai's* sailors, leaving a cocoanut tree to which they had been clinging, came to their aid, leaning against the wind at impossible angles and fighting and clawing every inch of the way.

The old man's joints were stiff, and he could not climb, so the sailors, by means of short ends of rope tied together, hoisted him up the trunk a few feet at a time, till they could make him fast at the top of the tree, fifty feet from the ground. Raoul passed his length of rope around the base of an adjacent tree and stood looking on. The wind was frightful. He had never dreamed it could blow so hard. A sea breached across the atoll, wetting him to the knees ere it subsided into the lagoon. The sun had disappeared, and a lead-coloured twilight had settled down. A few drops of rain, driving horizontally, struck him. The impact was like that of leaden pellets. A splash of salt spray struck his face. It was like the slap of a man's hand. His cheeks stung, and involuntary tears of pain were in his smarting eyes. Several hundred natives had taken to the trees, and he could have laughed at the bunches of human fruit clustering in the tops. Then, being Tahitian born, he doubled his body at the waist, clasped the trunk of his tree with his hands, pressed the soles of his feet against the near surface of the trunk, and began to walk up the tree. At the top he found two women, two children, and a man. One little girl clasped a house-cat in her arms.

From his eyrie he waved his hand to Captain Lynch, and that doughty patriarch waved back. Raoul was appalled at the sky. It had approached much nearer—in fact, it seemed just over his head—and it had turned from lead to black. Many people were still on the ground, grouped about the bases of the trees and holding on. Several such clusters were praying, and in one the Mormon missionary was exhorting. A weird sound, rhythmical, faint as the faintest chirp of a far cricket, enduring but for a moment, but in that moment suggesting to him vaguely the thought of heaven and celestial music, came to his ear. He glanced about him and saw, at the base of another tree, a large cluster of people holding on by ropes and by one another. He could see their faces working and their lips moving in unison. No sound came to him, but he knew they were singing hymns.

Still the wind continued to blow harder. By no conscious process could he measure it, for it had long since passed beyond all his experience of wind, but he knew somehow, nevertheless, that it was blowing harder. Not far away a tree was uprooted, flinging its load of humans to the ground. A sea washed across the strip of sand, and they were gone. Things were happening quickly. He saw a brown shoulder and a black head silhouetted against the churning white of the lagoon. The next instant that, too, had vanished. Other trees were going, falling and criss-crossing like matches. He was amazed at the power of the wind. His own tree was swaying perilously, one woman was wailing and clutching the little girl who, in turn, still hung on to the cat.

The man holding the other child touched Raoul's arm and pointed. He looked and saw the Mormon church careering drunkenly a hundred feet away. It had been torn from its foundation, and wind and sea were heaving and shoving it towards the lagoon. A frightful wall of water caught it, tilted it, and flung it against half-a-dozen cocoanut trees. The bunches of human fruit fell like ripe cocoanuts. The subsiding wave showed them on the ground, some lying motionless, others squirming and writhing. They reminded him strangely of ants. He was not shocked; he had risen above horror. Quite as a matter of course he noted the succeeding wave sweep the sand clean of the human wreckage. A third wave, more colossal than any he had yet seen, hurled the church into the lagoon, where it floated off into the obscurity to leeward, half-submerged, reminding him for all the world of a Noah's ark.

He looked for Captain Lynch's house, and was surprised to find it gone. Things certainly were happening quickly. He noticed that many of the people in the trees that still held had descended to the ground. The wind had yet again increased; his own tree showed that. It no longer swayed or bent over and back. Instead, it remained practically stationary, curved in a rigid angle from the wind and merely vibrating. But the vibration was sickening; it was like that of a tuning-fork or the tongue of a Jew's-harp. It was the rapidity of the vibration that made it so bad. Even though its roots held, it could not stand the strain for long; something would have to break.

Ah, there was one that had gone! He had not seen it go, but there it stood, the remnant, broken off half-way up the trunk. One did not know what happened unless one saw it. The mere crashing of trees and wails of human despair occupied no place in that mighty volume of sound. He chanced to be looking in Captain Lynch's direction when it happened. He saw the trunk of the tree, half-way up, splinter and part without noise. The head of the tree, with three sailors of the *Aorai* and the old captain, sailed off over the lagoon. It did not fall to the ground, but drove through the air like a piece of chaff. For a hundred yards he followed its flight, when it struck the water. He strained his eyes, and was sure that he saw Captain Lynch wave farewell.

Raoul did not wait for anything more. He touched the native and made signs to descend to the ground. The man was willing, but his women were paralysed from terror, and he elected to remain with them. Raoul passed his rope around the tree and slid down. A rush of salt water went over his head. He held his breath and clung desperately to the rope. The water subsided, and in the shelter of the trunk he breathed once more. He fastened the rope more securely, and then was put under by another sea. One of the women slid down and joined him, the native remaining by the other woman, the two children, and the cat.

The supercargo had noticed how the groups clinging at the bases of the other trees continually diminished. Now he saw the process work out alongside him. It required all his strength to hold on, and the woman who had joined him was growing weaker. Each time he emerged from a sea, he was surprised to find himself still there, and next surprised to find the woman still there. At last he emerged to find himself alone. He looked up. The top of the tree had gone as well. At half its original height a splintered end vibrated. He was safe. The roots still held, while the tree had been shorn of its windage. He began to climb up. He was so weak that he went slowly, and sea after sea caught him before he was above them. Then he tied himself to the trunk, and stiffened his soul to face the night and he knew not what.

He felt very lonely in the darkness. At times it seemed to him that it was the end of the world, and that he was the last one left alive. Still the wind increased; hour after hour it increased. By what he calculated was eleven o'clock, the wind had become unbelievable. It was a horrible, monstrous thing, a screaming fury, a wall that smote and passed on, but that continued to smite and pass on—a wall without end. It seemed to him that he had become light and ethereal; that it was he that was in motion; that he was being driven with inconceivable velocity through unending solidness. The wind was no longer air in motion; it had become substantial, as water or quicksilver. He had a feeling that he could reach into it and tear it out in chunks, as one might do with the meat in the carcase of a steer; that he could seize hold of the wind and hang on to it as a man might hang on to the face of a cliff.

The wind strangled him. He could not face it and breathe, for it rushed in through his mouth and nostrils, distending his lungs like bladders. At such moments it seemed to him that his body was being packed and swollen with solid earth. Only by pressing his lips to the trunk of the tree could he breathe. Also, the ceaseless impact of the wind exhausted him; body and brain became wearied. He no longer observed, no longer thought, and was but semi-conscious. One idea constituted his consciousness: *So this was a hurricane.* That one idea persisted irregularly; it was like a feeble flame that flickered occasionally. From a state of stupor he would return to it: *So this was a hurricane*—then he would go off into another stupor.

The height of the hurricane endured from eleven at night till three in the morning, and it was at eleven that the tree in which clung Mapuhi and his women snapped off. Mapuhi rose to the surface of the lagoon, still clutching his daughter Ngakura. Only a South Sea Islander could have lived in such a driving smother. The pandanus tree to which he attached himself turned over and over in the froth and churn, and it was only by holding on at times and waiting, and at other times by shifting his grips rapidly, that he was able to get his head and Ngakura's to the surface at intervals sufficiently near together to keep the breath in them. But the air was mostly water, what with flying spray and sheeted rain that poured along at right angles to the perpendicular.

It was ten miles across the lagoon to the farther ring of sand. Here, tossing tree-trunks, timbers, wrecks of cutters, and wreckage of houses, killed nine out of ten of the miserable humans who survived the passage of the lagoon. Half-drowned,

exhausted, they were hurled into this mad mortar of the elements and battered into formless flesh. But Mapuhi was fortunate. His chance was the one in ten; it fell to him by the freakage of Fate. He emerged upon the sand, bleeding from a score of wounds. Ngakura's left arm was broken, the fingers of her right hand were crushed, and cheek and forehead were laid open to the bone. He clutched a tree that yet stood, and clung on, holding the girl and sobbing for air, while the waters of the lagoon washed by knee-high and at times waist-high.

At three in the morning the backbone of the hurricane broke; by five no more than a stiff breeze was blowing; and by six it was dead calm and the sun was shining. The sea had gone down. On the yet restless edge of the lagoon, Mapuhi saw the broken bodies of those that had failed in the landing. Undoubtedly Tefara and Nauri were among them. He went along the beach examining them, and came upon his wife, lying half in and half out of the water. He sat down and wept, making harsh, animal noise, after the manner of primitive grief. Then she stirred uneasily and groaned. He looked more closely. Not only was she alive, but she was uninjured. She was merely sleeping. Hers also had been the one chance in ten.

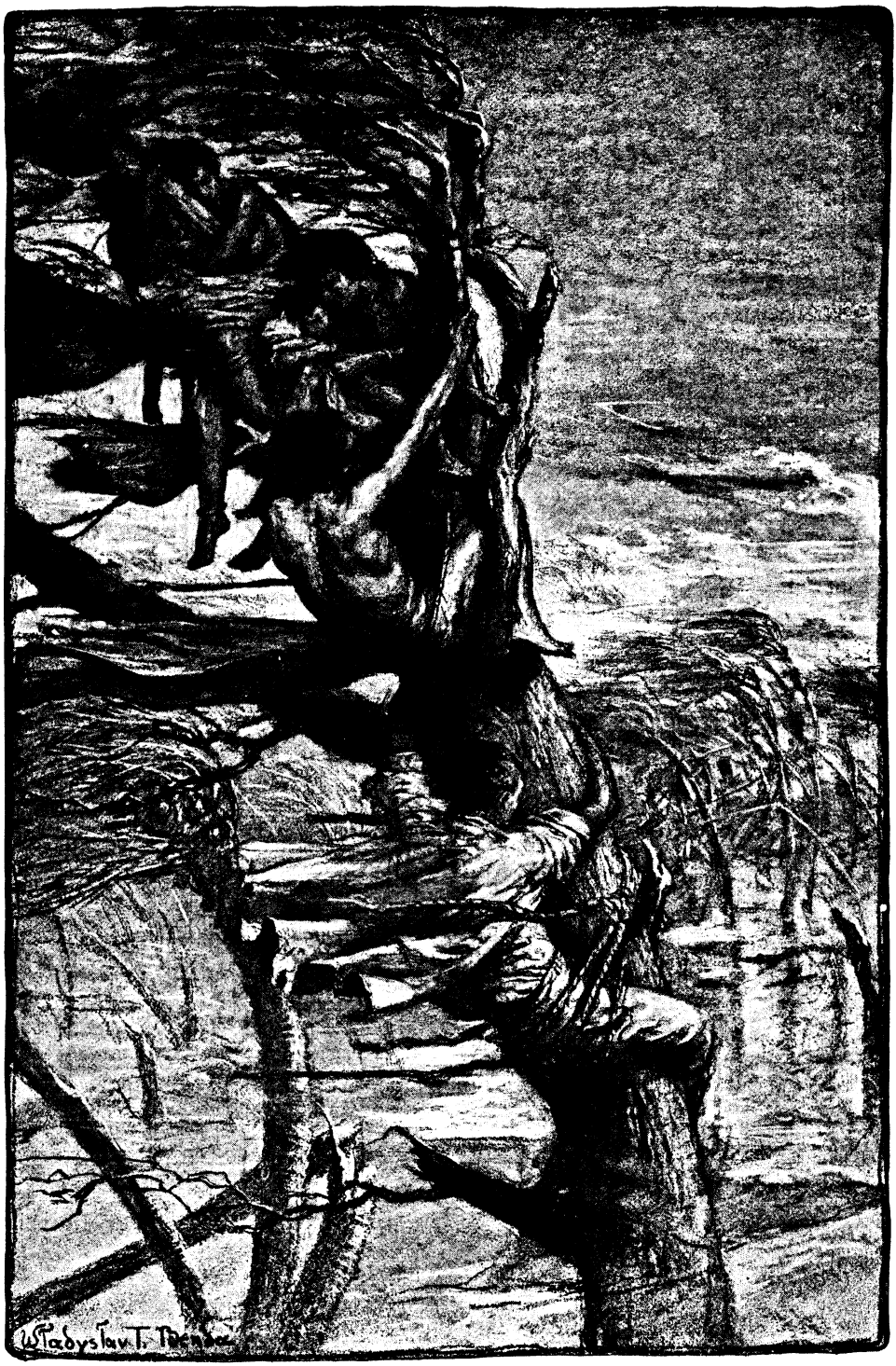
Of the twelve hundred alive the night before, but three hundred remained. The Mormon missionary and a *gendarme* made the census. The lagoon was cluttered with corpses. Not a house nor a hut was standing; in the whole atoll not two stones remained one upon another. One in fifty of the cocoanut palms still stood, and they were wrecks, while on not one of them remained a single nut. There was no fresh water; the shallow wells, that caught the surface seepage of the rain, were filled with salt. Out of the lagoon a few soaked bags of flour were recovered. The survivors cut the hearts out of the fallen cocoanut trees and ate them. Here and there they crawled into tiny hutches, made by hollowing out the sand and covering over with fragments of metal roofing. The missionary made a crude still, but he could not distil water for three hundred persons. By the end of the second day, Raoul, taking a bath in the lagoon, discovered that his thirst was somewhat relieved. He cried out the news, and thereupon three hundred men, women, and children could have been seen standing up to their necks in the lagoon and trying to drink water in through their skins. Their dead floated about them, or were stepped upon where they still lay upon the bottom. On the third day the people buried their dead and sat down to wait for the rescue steamers.

In the meantime, Nauri, torn from her family by the hurricane, had been swept away on an adventure of her own. Clinging to a rough plank, that wounded and bruised her and that filled her body with splinters, she was thrown clear over the atoll and carried away to sea. Here, under the amazing buffets of mountains of water, she lost her plank. She was an old woman—nearly sixty—but she was Paumotan born, and she had never been out of sight of the sea in her life. Swimming in the darkness, strangling, suffocating, fighting for air, she was struck a heavy blow on the shoulder by a cocoanut. On the instant her plan was formed, and she seized the nut. In the next hour she captured seven more. Tied together, they formed a life-buoy that preserved her life, while at the same time it threatened to pound her to a jelly. She was a fat woman, and she bruised easily; but she had experience of hurricanes, and, while she prayed to her shark god for protection from sharks, she waited for the wind to break. But at three o'clock she was in such a stupor that she did not know. Nor did she know at six o'clock, when the dead calm settled down. She was shocked into consciousness when she was thrown upon the sand. She dug in with raw and bleeding hands and feet, and clawed against the backwash until she was beyond the reach of the waves.

She knew where she was. This land could be no other than the tiny islet of Takokota. It had no lagoon. No one lived upon it. Hikueru was fifteen miles away. She could not see Hikueru, but she knew that it lay to the south. The days went by, and she lived on the cocoanuts that had kept her afloat. They supplied her with drinking water and with food. But she did not drink all she wanted, nor eat all she wanted. Rescue was problematical. She saw the smoke of the rescue steamers on the horizon, but what steamer could be expected to come to lonely, uninhabited Takokota?

From the first she was tormented by corpses. The sea persisted in flinging them upon her bit of sand, and she persisted, until her strength failed, in thrusting them back into the sea, where the sharks tore at them and devoured them. When her strength failed, the bodies festooned her beach with ghastly horror, and she withdrew from them as far as she could, which was not far.

By the tenth day her last cocoanut was



"Bunches of human fruit."

gone, and she was shrivelling from thirst. She dragged herself along the sand, looking for cocoanuts. It was strange that so many bodies floated up, and no nuts. Surely there were more cocoanuts afloat than dead men! She gave up at last and lay exhausted. The end had come; nothing remained but to wait for death.

Coming out of a stupor, she became slowly aware that she was gazing at a patch of sandy-red hair on the head of a corpse. The sea flung the body towards her, then drew it back. It turned over, and she saw that it had no face. Yet there was something familiar about that patch of sandy-red hair. An hour passed. She did not exert herself to make the identification. She was waiting to die, and it mattered little to her what man that thing of horror once might have been.

But at the end of the hour she sat up slowly and stared at the corpse. An unusually large wave had thrown it beyond the reach of the lesser waves. Yes, she was right; that patch of red hair would belong to but one man in the Paumotus. It was Levy, the German Jew, the man who had bought the pearl and carried it away on the *Hira*. Well, one thing was evident—the *Hira* had been lost. The pearl-buyer's god of fishermen and thieves had gone back on him.

She crawled down to the dead man. His shirt had been torn away, and she could see the leather money-belt about his waist. She held her breath and tugged at the buckles. They gave easier than she had expected, and she crawled hurriedly away across the sand, dragging the belt after her. Pocket after pocket she unbuckled in the belt and found empty. Where could he have put it? In the last pocket of all she found it, the first and only pearl he had bought on the voyage. She crawled a few feet farther, to escape the pestilence of the belt, and examined the pearl. It was the one Mapuhi had found and been robbed of by Toriki. She weighed it in her hand and rolled it back and forth caressingly, but in it she saw no intrinsic beauty. What she did see was the house Mapuhi and Tefara and she had builded so carefully in their minds. Each time she looked at the pearl she saw the house in all its details, including the octagon drop-clock on the wall. That was something to live for.

She tore a strip from her *ahu* and tied the pearl securely about her neck. Then she went on along the beach, panting and groaning, but resolutely seeking for cocoanuts. Quickly she found one, and, as she glanced around, a second. She broke one, drinking its water, which was mildewy, and eating the last particle of its meat. A little later she found a shattered dug-out. Its outrigger was gone, but she was hopeful, and, before the day was out, she found the outrigger. Every find was an augury. The pearl was a talisman. Late in the afternoon she saw a wooden box floating low in the water. When she dragged it out on the beach, its contents rattled, and inside she found ten tins of salmon. She opened one by hammering it on the canoe. When a leak was started, she drained the tin. After that she spent several hours in extracting the salmon, hammering and squeezing it out a morsel at a time.

Eight days longer she waited for rescue. In the meantime she fastened the outrigger back on the canoe, using for lashings all the cocoanut fibre she could find, and also what remained of her *ahu*. The canoe was badly cracked, and she could not make it water-tight, but a calabash made from a cocoanut she stored on board for a baler. She was hard put for a paddle. With a piece of tin she sawed off all her hair close to the scalp. Out of the hair she braided a cord, and by means of the cord she lashed a three-foot piece of broom-handle to a board from the salmon case. She gnawed wedges with her teeth, and with them wedged the lashing.

On the eighteenth day, at midnight, she launched the canoe through the surf and started back for Hikueru. She was an old woman. Hardship had stripped her fat from her till scarcely more than bones and skin and a few stringy muscles remained. The canoe was large, and should have been paddled by three strong men; but she did it alone with a makeshift paddle. Also, the canoe leaked badly, and one-third of her time was devoted to baling. By clear daylight she looked vainly for Hikueru. Astern, Takokota had sunk beneath the sea-rim. The sun blazed down on her nakedness, compelling her body to surrender its moisture. Two tins of salmon were left, and in the course of the day she battered holes in them and drained the liquid. She had no time to waste in extracting the meat. A current was setting to the westward, which made westing whether she made southing or not.

In the early afternoon, standing upright in the canoe, she sighted Hikueru. Its wealth of cocoanut palms was gone. Only here and there, at wide intervals, could she see the ragged remnants of trees. The sight cheered her; she was nearer than she had

thought. The current was setting her to the westward. She bore up against it and paddled on. The wedges in the paddle-lashing worked loose, and she lost much time, at frequent intervals, in driving them tight. Then there was the baling. One hour in three she had to cease paddling in order to bale; and all the time she drifted to the westward.

By sunset Hikueru bore south-east from her, three miles away. There was a full moon, and by eight o'clock the land was due east and two miles away. She struggled on for another hour, but the land was far away as ever. She was in the main grip of the current; the canoe was too large, the paddle was too inadequate, and too much of her time and strength was wasted in baling. Besides, she was very weak and growing weaker. Despite her efforts, the canoe was drifting off to the westward.

She breathed a prayer to her shark god, slipped over the side, and began to swim. She was actually refreshed by the water, and quickly left the canoe astern. At the end of an hour the land was perceptibly nearer.

* * * * *

In the hole in the sand, covered over by fragments of metal roofing, Mapuhi and Tefara lay disputing.

"If you had done as I said," charged Tefara, for the thousandth time, "and hidden the pearl and told no one, you would have it now."

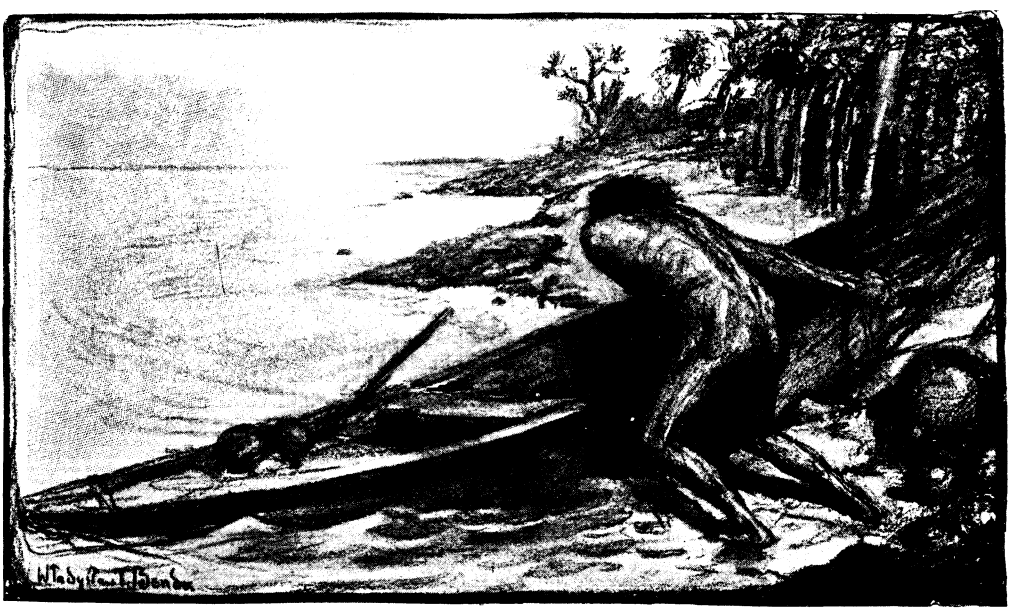
"But Huru-Huru was with me when I opened the shell. Have I not told you so times and times and times without end?"

"And now we shall have no house. Raoul told me to-day that if you had not sold the pearl to Toriki——"

"I did not sell it; Toriki robbed me."

"—that if you had not sold the pearl, he would give you five thousand French dollars, which is ten thousand Chili."

"He has been talking to his mother,"



"She launched the canoe through the surf."

Mapuhi explained; "she has an eye for a pearl."

"And now the pearl is lost," Tefara complained.

"It paid my debt with Toriki. That is twelve hundred I have made, anyway."

"Toriki is dead!" she cried. "They have heard no word of his schooner; she was lost along with the *Aorai* and the *Hira*. Will Toriki pay you the three hundred credit he promised? No, because Toriki is dead. And had you found no pearl, would you to-day owe Toriki the twelve hundred? No, because Toriki is dead, and you cannot pay dead men."

"But Levy did not pay Toriki," Mapuhi

said. "He gave him a piece of paper that was good for the money in Papeete; and now Levy is dead and cannot pay, and Toriki is dead and the paper lost with him, and the pearl is lost with Levy. You are right, Tefara. I have lost the pearl and got nothing for it. Now let us sleep."

He held up his hand suddenly and listened. From without came a noise, as of one who breathed heavily and with pain. A hand fumbled against the mat that served for a door.

"Who is there?" Mapuhi cried.

"Nauri," came the answer. "Can you tell me where is my son, Mapuhi?"

Tefara screamed and gripped her husband's arm.

"A ghost!" she chattered—"a ghost!"

Mapuhi's face was a ghastly yellow; he clung weakly to his wife.

"Good woman," he said, in faltering tones, striving to disguise his voice, "I know your son well. He is living on the east side of the lagoon."

From without came the sound of a sigh. Mapuhi began to feel elated; he had fooled the ghost.

"But where do you come from, old woman?" he asked.

"From the sea," was the dejected answer.

"I knew it — I knew it!" screamed Tefara, rocking to and fro.

"Since when has Tefara dwelt in a strange house?" came Nauri's voice through the matting.

Mapuhi looked fear and reproach at his wife; it was her voice that had betrayed them.

"And since when has Mapuhi, my son, denied his old mother?" the voice went on.

"No, no, I have not—Mapuhi has not denied you!" he cried. "I am not Mapuhi; he is on the east side of the lagoon, I tell you."

Ngakura sat up in bed and began to cry. The matting started to shake.

"What are you doing?" Mapuhi demanded.

"I am coming in," said the voice of Nauri.

One end of the matting lifted. Tefara tried to dive under the blankets, but Mapuhi held on to her; he had to hold on to something. Together, struggling with each other, with shivering bodies and chattering teeth, they gazed with protruding eyes at the lifting mat. They saw Nauri, dripping with sea-water, without her *ahu*, creep in. They rolled over backwards from her and fought for Ngakura's blanket with which to cover their heads.

"You might give your old mother a drink of water," the ghost said plaintively.

"Give her a drink of water," Tefara commanded, in a shaking voice.

"Give her a drink of water," Mapuhi passed on the command to Ngakura.

And together they kicked out Ngakura from under the blanket. A minute later, peeping, Mapuhi saw the ghost drinking. When it reached out a shaking hand and laid it on his, he felt the weight of it, and was convinced that it was no ghost. Then he emerged, dragging Tefara after him, and in a few minutes all were listening to Nauri's tale. And when she told of Levy, and dropped the pearl into Tefara's hand, even she was reconciled to the reality of her mother-in-law.

"In the morning," said Tefara, "you will sell the pearl to Raoul for five thousand French."

"The house?" objected Nauri.

"He will build the house," Tefara answered. "He says it will cost four thousand French. Also will he give one thousand French in credit, which is two thousand Chili."

"And it will be six fathoms long?" Nauri queried.

"Aye," answered Mapuhi, "six fathoms."

"And in the middle room will be the octagon drop-clock?"

"Aye, and the round table as well."

"Then give me something to eat, for I am hungry," said Nauri complacently. "And after that we will sleep, for I am weary; and to-morrow we will have more talk about the house before we sell the pearl. It will be better if we take the thousand French in cash; money is ever better than credit in buying goods from the traders."



PLAY CENTRES FOR POOR CHILDREN.

BY BEATRIX M. DE BURGH,

WITH INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY

MRS. HUMPHRY WARD.

THE following article by Miss Beatrix de Burgh gives a very faithful picture of a typical Play Centre evening. A recent visit to the United States has confirmed me in the belief that the provision of organised play for the children of the elementary schools ought to be the care not only of the more fortunate and leisured classes, but of the State itself. In New York, Chicago, Boston, and a fast-growing number of the large American towns, organised playground and evening recreation schools have become the charge of the State or City Education Authority.

Only last year the State of Massachusetts passed a law enabling every town of over 10,000 inhabitants, after taking a referendum, to make provision for organised playgrounds —meaning thereby playgrounds under a trained superintendent, with equipment for games. So great was the enthusiasm shown at the time of the passing of the law that no doubt is felt as to the result of the town referenda now being held throughout the State. The law will be everywhere adopted and the playgrounds will become municipal.

The organisation of play and the appointment of "play-leaders" does not involve—as some people think it must—any restraint on the free play of the child's imagination or sense of fun, or any loss of unfettered and spontaneous enjoyment. The only fetters recognised under a good—though trained—superintendent of an organised playground or play-centre, are the fetters of good manners and gentleness; the only restraint imposed is the gradual instilling of a sense of fair play and of unselfish give-and-take. And in the opinion of those of us who have had practical experience in these matters for several years, the proper handling of very large numbers of children, so that an ordered happiness prevails, and not chaos, can only be looked for at the hands of those who have

had special training for the work, though voluntary help in combination with this special training is everywhere and always welcome, and has a special place of its own.

Meanwhile, here in London, the expenses of our education system are so great, and the claims upon both National and County Council funds so heavy, that it will, I fear, be some time yet before this question of organised play will receive the amount of public attention and public support which it undoubtedly deserves. Private effort and private generosity must therefore carry the Play Centres along, and gradually extend them so that public opinion may more and more recognise the value of the work they are capable of doing. I sincerely hope that Miss de Burgh's article may bring us more friends and more supporters.

MARY A. WARD,
Chairman and Treasurer of the Evening Play Centres Committee.



QUIET GAMES.

There had been a fire at the toyshop round the corner, and for days before the salvage sale, small, grimy faces had been pressed against the window-panes, and dirty, wee fingers had pointed out bargains marked at such prices as, surely, never toys were marked before.

At nine on the morning of the sale, poor mothers with poor children, decent mothers with decent children, shabby mothers with shabby children, and still more luckless children with no mothers at all, were waiting outside the shop door with their scanty pence.

The shop opened at ten.

By noon every child in the neighbouring mean streets and slums had a toy of sorts. The result became apparent in bands of small folk, with drum and trumpet and whistle, marching here and there. They had a leader, a captain-general of ten, or thereabouts, in a paper helmet, and all the others, twenty or thirty of them, did as he told them—and thereby hangs a tale.

Some weeks before, a friend of mine had asked me to go with her to one of the Play Centres which Mrs. Humphry Ward, in her

large-hearted generosity towards city children, had instituted. I was asked to go and see children taught to play. It sounded odd. Was there ever a child, I wondered, who needed to be taught to play? Yes, I was told, hundreds — nay, thousands of children did not know how to play, so greatly had this monstrous city robbed them of their heritage of childhood.



MORRIS DANCERS.

I found it a saying hard to believe, so I watched for myself, and I discovered it was a true saying — bitterly true. London children, as a rule, do not play. The street is their playground, but they have no real games. They run backwards and forwards across the roads, miraculously threading the rushing traffic, they hang on behind cabs and motor vehicles, they lounge and loiter, rain or shine, in the dirty streets, and around the swing doors of public-houses, learning Heaven knows what of coarsening character — but they do not play — not the average children.

Now and then one of them may show some initiative, but it is the exception, and when he does, he becomes a captain-general of irregular forces and commands an army of automata, like my hero of the paper helmet; or if it should happen to be a girl, she is a school-marm, whose rostrum is the pavement, and



MORRIS DANCERS,

whose most obedient scholars are ranged on convenient doorsteps for forms.

There is a favourite corner for boys opposite my window. It is at the end of a mews, and every evening about a dozen lads, ten or eleven years old, meet there. Very often they are accompanied by an older lad, about sixteen, and he organises races, wrestling bouts, or even a mild sparring match. The boys are emulous, excited, energetic, but they never dispute his decisions, and they thoroughly enjoy themselves. When their mentor is not there, the same lads quarrel, fight, and use bad language, and never seem to get through one decent, honest game.

My observations having taught me that my friend was right, that most London children do *not* know how to play, I went to see them learn, and this is what I saw.

Imagine the large hall of a London County Council school—for the Council, in lending its schools, has made this great scheme possible—imagine, I say, a large, clean, brilliantly lit hall, with smaller rooms opening out of it. The floor space is cleared, and in one corner stands a piano. The pianist, seated waiting, is a schoolgirl, pale-faced and delicate, who plays with astonishing verve and swing. Near her is the superintendent, a fine-looking girl whose heart is evidently in her work. Behind the piano, a smart little figure, in a pretty, short, green, gymnasium dress, is making ready to teach the young idea how to dance.

Behind the closed doors a hum of voices, subdued but voluminous, indicates the presence of the children waiting to be admitted, and behind the children lies the network of mean streets from which most of them come—the maze of Hoxton slums. It was a wet, dirty night, for in midwinter it is night at five, and the Play Centres are open five nights a week from 5.30 to 7.30, and for an hour and a half on Saturday morning. Every child attends a Centre twice a week nominally, but is admitted a third time to the "Quiet Games Room," or for a Lantern Lecture.

At most of the Centres two sets of children are admitted in the evening for an hour each, but at three of the Centres the same children remain for an hour and forty minutes, changing occupations at half-time. Each system has its advantages, and which of the two shall obtain at any one Centre is for the most part determined by local conditions. At all the Centres there are a certain number of children on the superintendent's "every night" list—that is to say, children who, by reason of their parents being out at work till late, or who have neglected homes, or for other special reasons, are allowed to attend the Centres every evening.

At a few minutes before the half-hour, the pianist struck up a lively march, and almost at once the doors were opened. In trooped the children, babies first—such tiny things, although they must be over three to be admitted. Leading them were brothers and sisters, some not much more than babies themselves. After them came boys and girls of all ages from three to fourteen—rags, dirt, and shabby decency, side by side; broken boots and torn coats; dirty faces and clean; healthy roses and sickly pallor; but, clean or dirty, healthy or pale, all faces beaming with delight.

The little ones marched straight to the Babies' Room, and the boys to the Basket Making Room, or the Library, or the Wood Work Room. The girls remained in the hall and marched round in excellent time to the music till they were halted by the smart little lady in the green tunic.

"Good evening, children!"

"Good evening, miss!"

There was a joyous ring in the young voices, and, hats and coats having been got rid of, the games began.

They marched in wheels and circles; they marched a Chinese march with heads nodding like mandarins; and a march like quaint birds, with high-stepping feet, and arms waving like pinions. They played singing games, funny and graceful, and learned the figures of the morris dance, and they did it all remarkably well, and with the most intense enjoyment.

Meanwhile, in the other rooms, other games were in progress. In the Library, boys and girls were reading or looking at pictures. It must be confessed the picture-books are the favourites, although one typical London lad came up and asked for some book on the French Revolution—he was studying for a scholarship; and in a corner, a girl was reading "Julius Cæsar" in a low voice to another girl. Still, fairy tales and picture-books are the favourites. Three regular young ruffians asked me to tell them a fairy-tale, and meant it too, although at first I certainly thought they were "getting at me," as they would express it themselves. And here I might mention a stroke of policy on the part of the late superintendent which struck me as having a touch of the genius of

management. A certain number of the bigger boys and girls are made monitors, and are given the care of the rooms and the materials necessary for work and play. To these posts Miss Wragge—or, as the children who adore her *would* call her, "Mrs. Rags"—appointed, amongst others, some of the most tiresome children in the Centre. And the experiment is a great and emphatic success, as it deserved to be.

In the Basket-Making Room, a young lady was teaching another set of boys to make pretty and useful articles in coloured withes—waste-paper baskets, tidies, and the like.



A BASKET-WEAVING CLASS.

On another evening, clay-modellers were busy in this same room, most of them making models of alarum clocks, and chairs, with almost as much clay on their faces and hands as in the models. But they were enjoying themselves. It was better than making mud pies in the gutter!

The Carpentering Room was full—coats off—sleeves rolled up to the elbow—plane, saw and hammer busy as the busy tongues. All sorts of models were being made, motor-cars in wood, with steering-wheel complete, railway signal-posts with workable points, soap-tidies, tables, chairs, toy dressers—whatever their fancy dictated. The boys worked from models made by their able tutor, and, as instance of their earnestness, he told me that many of the boys will make the same object over and over again till they get it right. That is excellent. That is training hand and eye and mind to exactness and perseverance.

Another fine thing about the carpentering school is that it gives backward boys from the Council schools a chance to learn wood-work—boys who would never, in the ordinary way, reach a sufficiently high standard to learn it in the Council schools. There were dull faces, but ready fingers amongst some of the bigger lads, but what a bright wit and quick brain most of these undergrown, underfed children own! What material to work on, if the chance were only there! Mrs. Humphry Ward and her helpers are taking all the chances they can, but much more could be done if the means at their disposal were larger.

Other useful things learnt under the guise of play are sewing, knitting, cobbling; and besides the dancing, in the way of games, there are Toy Rooms, Quiet Games Rooms (loto, draughts, etc.), gymnastics, and for the boys—drill. Not school drill, be it understood, but a spirited game under

the direction of a drill-sergeant, played with toy guns, in which the boys skirmish, and charge, and fire imaginary volleys, with all the delight in life.

All the articles made by the children can be bought by them for a small sum. Nothing is given. The oldest of boots and shoes are welcomed for the cobbling classes, and when they are mended, poor mothers gratefully seize the chance of buying them for a merely nominal sum, and think far more of them than if they had received them as a gift. And, really, boots seem to be one of the children's most crying needs in the way of clothing. Most of them have garments—ragged, it is true, still, generally more or less sufficient for their needs; but oh, their poor feet! I could have wept over them, remembering the mud and wet outside . . . especially over one fairy-like little girl with the tiniest hands and feet, the latter covered with little old list slippers tied on with tape. And that wee maid brings me to the babies. They were playing with dolls. Only those with clean hands might nurse the smartly dressed dollies, so there was a premium on clean fingers, and they showed me their dear little hands with much pride and consequence. Poor little hands, that will hold so much more than their share of this world's heavy burden in days to come!

Their other toys consisted of a broken doll's bedstead, with a crooked leg, which had to be propped up, queer woolly animals—species unknown, rag dolls, and tea-sets innumerable, all odd, but that did not matter a bit.

They were the most charming of hosts and hostesses, and the number of imaginary cups of tea I drank out of small enamel cups, and equally imaginary dinners I ate off small tin plates, would defy calculation. Very quiet they sat, too, to have their pictures taken, only, when the flash went off, one tiny voice remonstrated with the doctor plaintively—

"Oh! Don't do that again, mister!"

They are such good babies, too. They scarcely ever seem to cry, or to snatch toys from one another, as I often see more fortunate babies doing.

Talk about those dear babies brings one to the little mothers—the elder sisters of the family circle. Things are rather hard on the little mothers. They cannot come in with babies under three. I saw one of the bigger girls slip out now and then, and a fresh face take her place, and, watching, I found that she had gone out into the street to hold the baby for her friend, that she might have a turn at dancing—so kindliness and unselfishness are also taught at play.

The whole thing is well organised. Children are not admitted to the Centre unless they are also admitted to the day school, and a list of houses infected by any illness in the district is sent to the superintendent by the local medical officer of health.

It is a great work, a fine work, for it supplies in a large measure the home training away from school which makes our middle classes what they are, and which it is practically impossible for the children of the lower classes to obtain. Some idea of what is being done can be gained when it is remembered that all these children, perhaps 400 of them every night in Hoxton alone, would be in the streets but for the Play Centre. They *must* play in the streets. Most of them live in homes of only one, or at most two rooms, and in a good many cases they cannot get into such homes as they have till "mother comes home from work." And that may be any hour up to ten o'clock. Even the decent parents, who dislike their children playing in the streets, can scarcely keep them penned up the whole evening in the one living-room which London rents make possible to them.

The saying that "Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton" has almost passed into a proverb. Thinkers and workers cannot but see that England is approaching another, an industrial Waterloo, and her one chance of winning it is to turn out decent, honest working men and women. And it is in the hours out of school as much as in the school itself that the children must learn.

These Play Centres make for the completion of the better educational system; they are the natural supplement of the work of the day schools. If every Council school could be open to its own children every night, for this purpose, that no doubt would be the ideal arrangement. Mrs. Ward holds that for the younger children, the children under eleven, the one-hour session, with the going and coming, and the inevitable waiting at the door, which children will never forego, takes enough time out of the evening, and mothers are of the same opinion. For many of the older children the same may be said. But no doubt for a large number of these it would also be a good thing if in their own school, every evening, they could find regular shelter for play and occupation, from 5.30 to 7.30, or from 6 to 8.

This, of course, would be much more expensive than the present system, according

to which the children using a Centre are drawn from three or four schools round, and are recruited from among those who, according to the teachers, need the most provision.

Mrs. Humphry Ward and her helpers have brought bright, happy, and wholesome hours into the lives of thousands of poor children. The little ones are learning more than games at the Play Centres. They are learning lessons of self-help, self-reliance, and self-respect, with a wholesome discipline thrown in, none the less real because it is unobtrusive, because they are doing what they choose instead of what they are told to do.

The work of the Play Centres is one in which all can help—men, women, and children. Toys, books, gymnastic shoes, no matter how small in quantity nor how old they are, all are of use.

Personal service can help greatly. Some Centres are very well off for voluntary workers, and some have few or none. Such helpers, when regular, are most welcome, and by thus supplementing the work of the paid staff, they enable a Centre to extend its operations considerably. Money, of course, is wanted, for the Centres rest on paid supervision, and the materials for the hand-work classes, and the toys, games and books, are a heavy charge on the funds. A sum of £3,000 a year is now required to work the twelve Centres efficiently, with a roll of 10,000 children. The average cost of each child, per year, is 6*s*.

The Play Centres are dotted all over London now, dating from the first one started at the Passmore Edwards Settlement in 1897. Battersea, Bethnal Green, Bow, Fulham, Hoxton, Notting Hill, Poplar, Ratcliff, Somers Town, Walworth—all have their Centres.

It almost seems as if this should be a national work, instead of a matter of personal enterprise. This is such a valuable card in the great game of national life that a few thinkers and workers for the people are playing.

"Save the children!" has ever been Mrs. Ward's cry, and it is the right cry, for the children of to-day, malleable and teachable, are the nation of to-morrow.

The photographs of typical Play Centre scenes here reproduced are given by kind permission of Dr. J. P. O'Hea.

THE EXPERIMENT.

A MILLION years ago the chemist old
Fused, in his furnace, many potent things—
Tincture of pride, red blood, and powdered gold,
Anger, and fear, and dust of broken wings,

And laughter, and the salt of unshed tears,
Sun-rays and moon-sheen from the skies above,
And courage in full measure. Down the years
He spilled the mixture—and we call it Love!

THEODORE ROBERTS.

TWO OF A KIND.

By JOHN WILLES.

MR. HENRY BRIGGS paused outside the inviting door of the "Sun" public-house and hesitated. It was a foggy Saturday night in Bayswater. Mr. Briggs having business in that locality, and finding himself before his time, did not hesitate long, he pushed open the swing door and entered. There was a mixed company assembled. Two Guardsmen, one rather flushed, a policeman off duty, three dirty-looking women, and a gentleman, evidently a devoted follower of Bacchus, and apparently on the look-out for trouble, seated in a corner.

The new-comer gave a quick look round, and noticing that the policeman was without his armlet, seemed relieved and advanced to the counter: "Pint o' six, miss, an' a bit o' bren-cheese," he said, throwing some coppers into the lake of malt collected there.

"Pint o' six, bren-cheese," repeated the barmaid, banging the provisions in front of him. "'Ave any mustard?"

"Ah! an' some pickles, an' a smile," continued Mr. Briggs, who was of a jovial disposition when away from his wife.

"Ho! you don't want much!" flounced the lady.

"No, 'tain't much, that ain't. P'raps you ain't got none; don't matter," and he laughed.

"Go hon, saucy," and she smiled lavishly.

"That's better," said the gentleman, and retired with his supper. He took it to the corner near the devotee, where there was a small table, and sat down. As his coat touched the bench there was a faint metallic clink from his pocket; it wasn't much, but it caused Mr. Briggs to draw in his breath sharply. He put his hand in for a second and felt something; whatever it was, he let it remain out of sight.

"Fi' ni'," ventured the devotee.

"Ah!" replied Briggs. "No, it ain't, it's bloomin' 'orrible," he corrected.

"I says fi' ni'," said the other aggresively.

"Say what you bloomin' please, I don't care. Cahn't you see I'm 'avin' supper?" said Briggs, with the air of one who wished to be left alone. "Shut up!"

"Wha's pleece doinere?"

"What?" asked Briggs, interested in spite of himself.

"What dooce doinere?"

"Oh, go an' boil yerself! Lemme alone!"

"Shaspenomore."

"Right O!" and Mr. Briggs went on with his meal.

The other, feeling deeply offended, gazed at him with a sorrowful and pitying expression; shook his head a great many times, and then divided his attention between the two soldiers and the policeman. Apparently finding the latter to be the more powerful attraction, he fixed his eyes on him and wept down his waistcoat.

The fog was thick outside and was creeping in. Mr. Briggs looked at it and rubbed his hands, as if he thoroughly approved. He muttered: "Bloomin' fine! 'ere's to ye!" and raised his tankard to the thickening air. Having plenty to occupy his thoughts, he resolved to remain where he was for a time and review the situation quietly. This excellent intention was unfortunately destined to be frustrated, and that quickly. The alcoholic gentleman finding Mr. Briggs to be but poor company, and standing in need of further refreshment, executed a hop, skip and jump movement towards the bar. Having with some difficulty reached that haven, he leaned, more or less gracefully, across it and demanded "'arf pi'."

"'Alf a pint?" said the barmaid disdainfully. "You'll get no more 'alf pints 'ere. You're drunk."

"Oo is?" haughtily demanded the customer.

"Why, you are," answered the flushed soldier, "blind."

"You go'n fight for your country," was the quick retort, "tha's what you do. I'm an Englishman; don't you touch me."

"Touch ye!" said the soldier. "I'll knock your 'ead down yer throat in 'alf a mo!"

"Quite right, soldier," one of the ladies

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put in. "G'im a shove in the jawr! 'e ain't fit to be in a respectable place—beast!"

"Now, then," from the barmaid, "no fightin' 'ere. Go outside if you can't be'ave."

"Oo can't be'ave?" shouted the insulted civilian.

"England for ever!" and he fell up against the two soldiers and cannoned on to the policeman.

What followed was so full of movement that description is difficult. The policeman received the civilian in the stomach, and, not desiring his company, threw him back to the British Army, which service, not being prepared, staggered against the counter, upsetting several glasses and tankards, and rolled from there into the sawdust, with the civilian between them. Whilst the three were performing the most extraordinary manœuvres upon the floor, they were joined by a cadaverous youth in a white apron, shirt-sleeves, and elaborately oiled hair, who, leaping actively over the counter, shouted that he would soon "out 'im." Unfortunately for the last-comer, he interfered at an unhappy moment, for one of the whirling fists lit fairly on the bridge of his somewhat pronounced nose, causing him to retire from the fray, grasping the injured feature, from which the life-blood flowed freely. By this time the three principals had reached the door, which Mr. Briggs, with an interested but unimpassioned face, with difficulty opened, allowing them to shoot with great force and rapidity on to the pavement. Outside they were received by two policemen and an excited crowd, and having been, with some difficulty, sorted, the soldiers returned to find their caps, and the *casus belli* was escorted, half dressed and shouting, to the police-station.

An angry discussion as to the rights and wrongs of the fracas beginning on the re-entry of the soldiers, and waxing quickly louder and louder, Mr. Briggs came to the conclusion that this was no place for quiet thought, and, having finished his supper, pushed open the door and disappeared into the night. He, apparently, had not far to go, for in a short time he stopped about half way down what, as far as could be seen for the fog, was a large and very respectable-looking square. Crossing the road, he stood under the branches of a large tree which overhung the railings, and fixed his eyes upon the opposite house. A church clock struck eleven.

At that moment light footsteps were heard approaching. Mr. Briggs affected to be engaged with his bootlace.

"That you, 'Enery?" inquired a passing boy, in a cautious tone.

"Course it is," answered Briggs. "Well?"

"I bin 'ere since ten," the boy went on, shivering. "Not 'alf parky; oh, no, not 'alf, it ain't!"

"Well?" said Briggs again impatiently.

"Well," the boy took him up fretfully, "it's a'right. The old bloke and the missis is gone. They won't be 'ome till Monday. The 'ouse was left in charge o' the footman. 'Im bein' a man, he comes up the airee steps a 'alf-hour back, an' the 'ousemaid she comes with 'im. 'What time are you a-comin' back?' she says. 'Well,' 'e says, 'it's this way, Loo, would you be frightened if I wasn't to come till very, very late?' 'e says. 'Why, no,' she says; 'why should I? I don't want ye.' 'Well, it's this way, Loo,' 'e says, 'ole Binns, bein' butler, and likewise responsible, 'avin' took 'is 'ook 'ome, an' the cook 'avin' took 'ers, I says to myself, I says, why should 'e leave me responsible? But since 'e *'as*, I shall take a leaf out of 'is book,' 'e says, laughin', an' she laughed, too. 'I'm a-goin' to see my Aunt Eliza,' 'e says, 'an' I may be kep up late. But you go to bed, an' get Miss Nellie to go too,' 'e says, 'an' you'll both be right O,' 'e says. 'I got the key, so don't you be frightened o' nothin', my gal.' 'I ain't frightened; an' Miss Nellie, she won't know nothin',' she says, laughin'. 'Good night, James. Give my love to your Aunt Eliza,' she says. Then James 'e took 'is 'ook, an' she looked at 'im a-prancin' down the street, an' she give another laugh, an' she says: 'That's all right; couldn't be no better,' she says, an' she went down the steps, an' that's all."

"Oh, that's all, is it?" said Briggs, with a pleased look. "You've done remarkably well, Ernie. I'm very pleased with you. Blow me if I shan't make somethink o' you yet. Well, this 'ere's turned out fine, an' no 'ank about it. I got it all to myself this time. Now you slope, Ern. You look cold—go on 'ome. 'Ere, stop a bit. Take this 'ere tanner. There's a pub up the street. You go in an' 'ave a drop o' rum 'ot an' a pork pie. If you see two soldiers in there, tell 'em you met a party outside, an' e says 'e's comin' in again for to 'ave their bleed. I dessay they'll give you another tanner for warnin' 'em. Goo'night."

"Goo'night, 'Enery. Bring us something out o' this job, will ye? A watch an' chain?" wistfully asked the apprentice.

"Ah, will I," answered the tutor—"a gold

'un all over sparklin' dimonds. Off ye go. Be a good boy. You'll be able to get 'em for yerself soon."

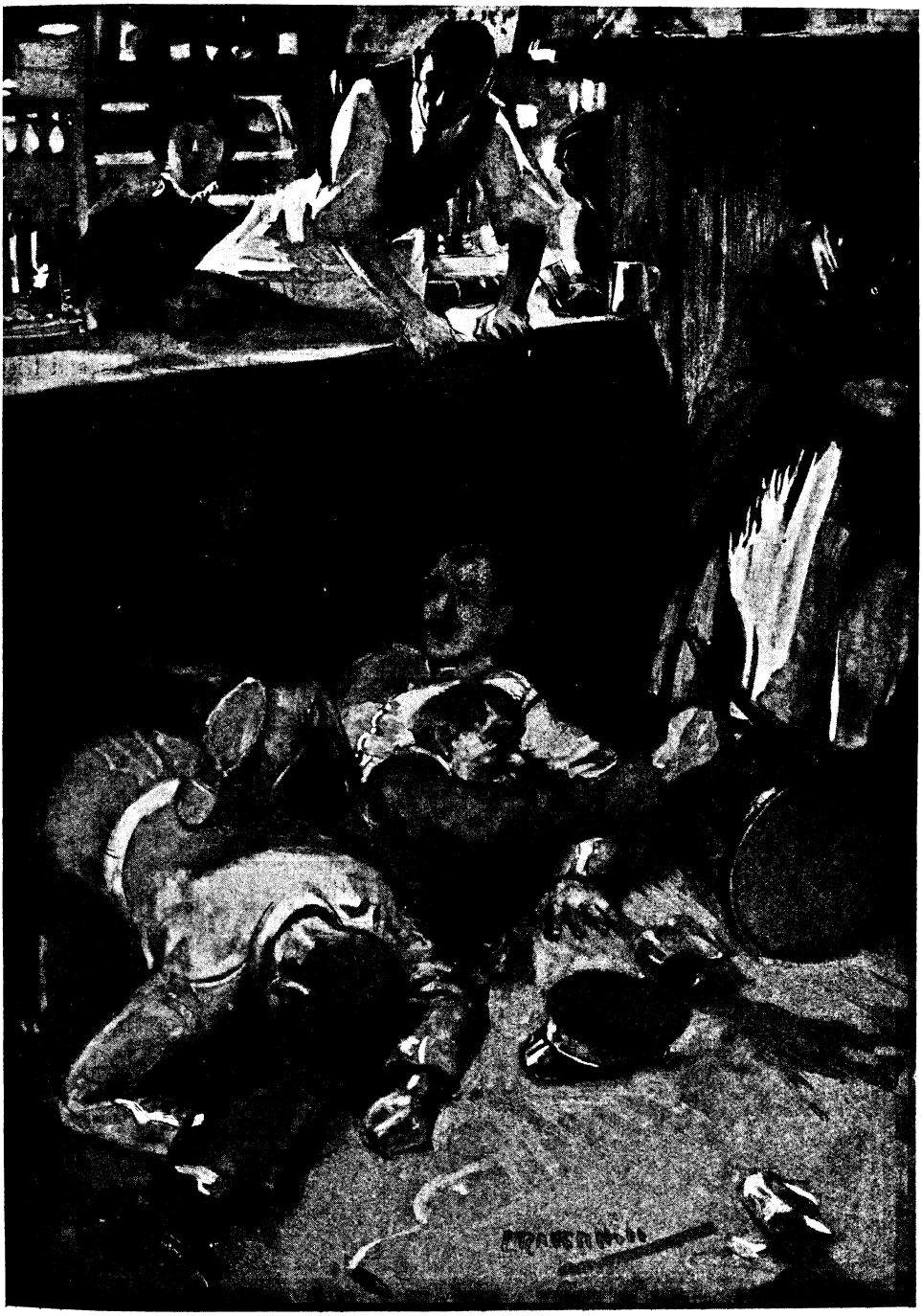
The boy disappeared into the mist, leaving Mr. Briggs to proceed to business. He crossed the road and looked up at the house. It was in total darkness. He listened for a minute and glanced to the right and left. Hearing and seeing nothing, he tried the gate of the area. It was unfastened. Passing through, he went quickly down the steps. He paused at the bottom and listened again. A policeman's unmistakable step approached. Mr. Briggs took up a position in a dark corner between the steps and the wall, and waited. The policeman as he passed flashed his lantern over the front door and the windows on either side, then on to the upper windows; discovering nothing, he passed on, having entirely neglected to flash his lantern over the crouching form in the area. "Now we're safe for a quarter of an hour," said Briggs to himself, and set to work. The tradesmen's door was on his left hand as he faced the house, and right in front of him was the kitchen window. He chose the window. Putting his hand into his coat pocket, he drew out a length of wire at the end of which was a tiny glass bulb; the other end was attached to a very neat little battery which remained in the pocket. Taking the bulb in his right hand, he pressed a button in the battery with his left, and the prettiest little glow of light imaginable shone on the window. The briefest inspection was enough for Mr. Briggs. "Or'inary ketch," he muttered. The light went out instantaneously, and with almost equal quickness the window opened, and the visitor went in and shut it after him; he also took the precaution of closing the shutters, which had been neglected. Having thus made things more secure, he turned on his light again and took a chair; his next proceeding was to remove his boots, and tying them together by the laces, he festooned them gracefully round his neck. He drew out a large-sized wash-leather housewife and, unrolling it, displayed an assortment of curious-looking, brightly polished tools, arranged in separate pockets. One of these pockets had become a little unstitched, allowing the instrument belonging to it to come out and knock against the others. This was the cause of the clinking noise when the owner had sat down in the public-house. Mr. Briggs looked at it with a frown, and announced his intention of "wiping someone's jaw" when he got home. For the present he fastened up the case and replaced it in his pocket. "Shan't want 'em, I don't s'pose," he said, and looked around.

It was a nice, clean kitchen, but the fire had got low; so he put a little coal on, with exquisite quietness and dexterity, then he turned to the table, where a pleasant surprise awaited him. The cloth was laid, and on it was a nice little supper and a nice large jug of beer.

"Left for James, I s'pose," he concluded. "Well, James'll 'ave to wait till breakfast, I'm afraid. I'm a-goin' to set about this 'ere little lot. What'll you take, Mr. Briggs? A little of this 'ere beef, Mr. Briggs? Thank you, I will, my lord; and a little of that there beer, my lord, what looks so bright an' sparkling on this festial board." And so in the best of humours Mr. Briggs enjoyed a second supper.

Having fully satisfied his appetite and finished the beer, he gave a sigh of satisfaction and began to take stock. From where he sat he observed that there were two doors—one near the window, which he concluded led to the scullery, and one on his right hand. "That'll be the stairs," pondered Briggs, and rising, he softly opened it. "Yes, that's the stairs." He listened a moment—there was no sound. "All abed an' asleep, are ye? That's good gals." He shut the door again and went to the other one. "Nothing 'ere, I don't s'pose. May as well see, though." He opened the second door. In a perfect frenzy of excited welcome there rushed out and leapt upon him a well-grown spaniel puppy, which affectionate animal, not being able to reach his face, contented himself as well as he could by nearly eating his hands. Having jumped from one side to the other some twenty times, the sagacious creature set off on a spirited race round and round the table, uttering sharp whines and squeaks expressive of the most intense joy. Then, as if he felt bound to amuse his visitor by every means in his power, he leapt right on the table and pretended to be about to fly at Mr. Briggs, by crouching down with his head between his front paws, as if in the act to spring and seize his victim by the throat, his tail—in fact, the whole back section of his body—wagging so violently that the jug was upset, whereupon he returned to the floor and continued his race.

Mr. Briggs was rooted to the spot on which he stood, and his blood turned cold within him. Savage dogs he was accustomed to; they came in the ordinary course of business and could be dealt with; but this friendly



"The three were performing the most extraordinary manœuvres upon the floor."

specimen flabbergasted him. He called softly "Ponto." The dog redoubled his exertions. He advanced to the table, and cutting a slice of meat, stooped down and offered it. The dog paused for an instant, and coming towards him, took no notice of the bribe, but planted a particularly slobbery lick on the end of his nose. Having got this one in, he resumed his wild career.

"Well, perish me pink, if this don't take it!" said Briggs in despair. "I must quiet 'im some'ow or chuck the job." He took a chair. The dog, having by this time put in about a mile, came to him panting, and putting his paws on Briggs's knees, looked up and tried another lick.

"Well, you're a nice 'un, you are," said Briggs to his friend, "a very nice 'un; but you're a bit in my way just now. What am I a-goin' to do with you, eh?" The dog wriggled from nose to tail. "Ho, yes, it's all very well. A lot o' gents in this 'ere awkward 'ole would 'ave your liver out, my buck; but I can't do that. I'm fond o' dogs, I am, lucky for you. I wouldn't 'urt you, no more nor I would a man—no, not so soon, I wouldn't. I'd rather chuck the bloomin' job, my son. What's your name, eh? P'raps it's on your collar. Le's see. Yes, I'm blowed if it ain't!" He took the dog on his lap—it made fresh efforts to reach his nose—and read engraved on the brass plate:

"KIMBO,"
Property of
Miss E. Robinson,
19, Pontefract Square.
£5 Reward to finder.

"Oh, Kimbo, is it?" The mention of its name threw the dog into further transports. "Now, then, Kimbo, you'll 'ave to go back to bed; and if you're very good, why, I'm blest if I don't come an' fetch you when I've bin an' packed my little traps up, an' you shall come an' stay along o' me a day or two. There, Kimbo. Now you go back to bed." He put the dog down and pointed to the scullery door. The dog looked at him doubtfully and wagged his stumpy tail. "Go on, now!" said Briggs severely. The dog walked very slowly towards the door, reached it, hesitated, sat down on the threshold, and looked back over his shoulder. "Go in, sir!" said Briggs again. The dog ran to the other door and sat down there. This entertainment proceeded for some time, but in the end the dog succeeded in persuading the man that he had no intention whatever of resuming his slumbers. Briggs walked about the kitchen, looking, purely out of habit, into drawers and cupboards, the dog, whose exuberance had now calmed down, following him everywhere and exhibiting the greatest interest in his proceedings, but not allowing himself to be caught. As he seemed quiet enough now, Briggs resolved to risk it.

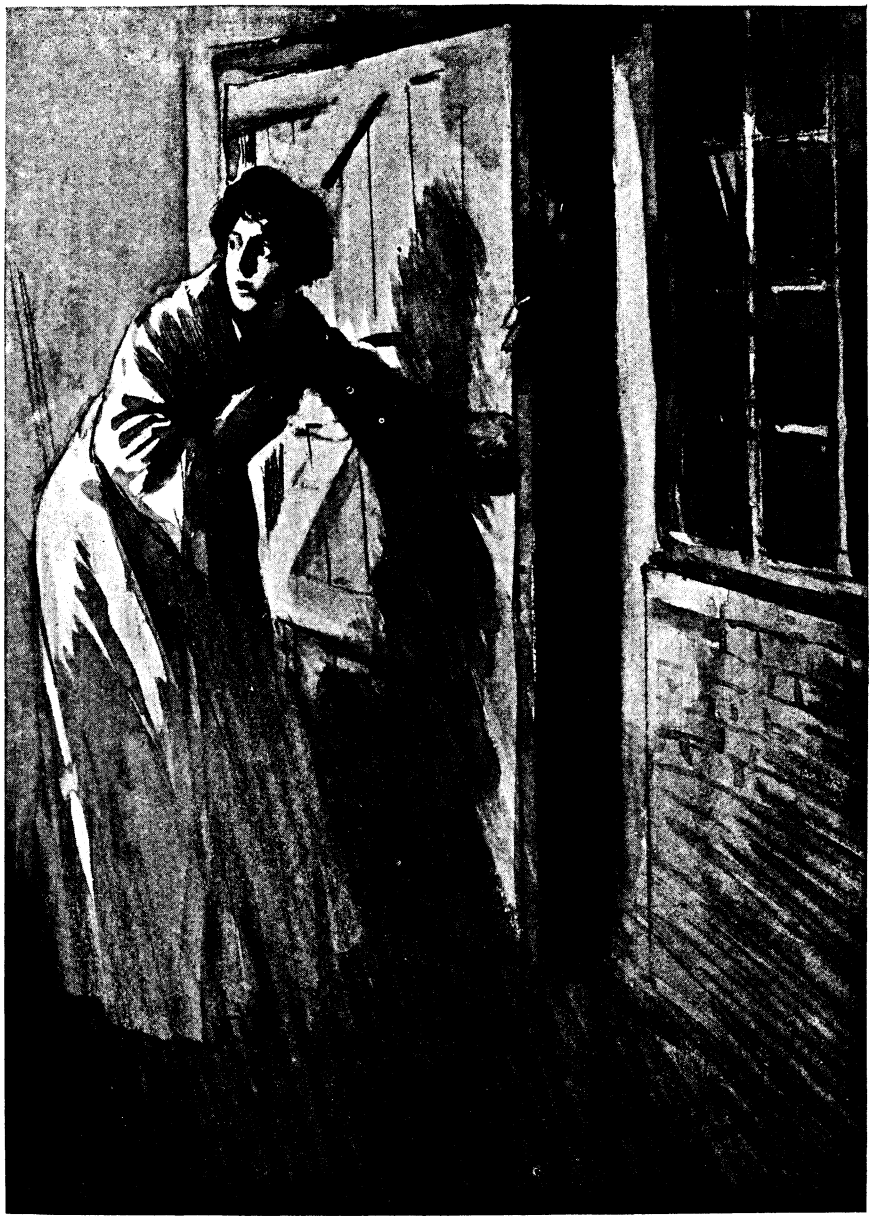
"Arter all," he said, addressing Kimbo, "if they do 'ear you, it won't so much matter. It's me they're likely to git narked at, an' I'll take care they don't 'ear me. So 'ere goes."

He went to the door which led upstairs and quietly opened it. There was a passage-way with two doors in it, and at the end the kitchen stairs. He opened the doors, a thing he never neglected. In one, some brooms and pots and pans; in the other, china, glass, knives and forks, etc., and a cask of ale. Mr. Briggs glanced at the forks and tried the weight of one, but put it back again. He glanced at the cask and then at his companion.

"Arter I've packed up my little traps, Kimbo, afore you an' me sets off for 'ome, where you're a-goin' to pay me a little visit, Kimbo. An' now let's see what they've got in the in'abited portion of the 'ouse."

He went quickly and noiselessly up the stairs. There was a swing door at the top; he pushed it open and found himself in a fine hall covered with mats and skins. "I'm glad o' that," he muttered; "they won't 'ear Kimbo's claws a-rattlin'. Look 'ere," he whispered to the dog, pointing to one of the skins which he took hold of, "you keep on them there bears and lions for all you're worth." Kimbo, having played the game before, and thinking it a very fine one, flew at the skin with great ferocity, and tearing the tail off, retired to a corner with the trophy, shaking it with pardonable pride. "Oh, my lord," murmured Briggs, "I'm sure they'll 'ear 'im!" which, indeed, seemed probable. "Drop it, will ye?" advancing on him. Kimbo got up with the tail in his mouth, and running to a door on the right which was ajar, pushed it open and disappeared. There was another doorway on the opposite side, which was closed. Mr. Briggs reflected: "That there door bein' open, an' the dog a-makin' straight for it, all points to the fac' of its bein' the dinin'-room; it don't take no Sherlock 'Omes for to see that." He stole up to it and looked in. It was the dining-room, and very nicely furnished—quite a promising-looking room, thought Mr. Briggs. Kimbo was on the hearthrug, still carrying the tail. "Let's see whether I can't get no prizes," said Mr. Briggs.

He cast a rapid, comprehensive glance round,



"The girl ran to the area door and opened it."

taking in every detail; long practice had enabled him to do this to a nicety. He came to the conclusion that the room had a solid, comfortable look, but to his taste was bare of ornamentation. "That there sideboard, now, what that wants is a elegant silver vawse or two." He went up to it and opened the doors. In one side was a plate-basket, but it was empty; in the other, wineglasses, a spirit-stand, and half a cake. Mr. Briggs helped himself to a little whisky reflectively. "Nothink on the sideboard," he continued, "nothink in the plate-basket, an' a cake lumped down any'ow. There's more in this than meets the eye. What ought to meet it 'as been put away. Where's the pantry, I wonder? I never see one downstairs. Where is it, Kimbo?" He looked towards the hearthrug. The dog was not there.

At the same moment he heard a noise in the hall. He looked cautiously out and discovered Kimbo, who had returned to his big-game hunting and was killing a lion's skin. "Drop it, will ye?" he whispered, going up to the dog, who had dragged the skin half under the hall table. In stooping to rescue it, his eye fell on something on the table. It was a carpenter's tool-basket. Thinking it to be rather a curious article for such a place, he looked at it thoughtfully. Pinned to it was a sheet of notepaper, on which was written: "Dear Love, In this please find the spoones an' forks, an' hornaments, likewise cake barskett wich cleers dinin' room, I 'ave put tea an' cawfee pot in Hoven in kitchen, marster's room is secund door on next landin', first door Miss Nellie where don't you go or she scream, I will open back door so no more at present. L." To say that Mr. Briggs was surprised would be unnecessary. He lifted the bag. It was pleasantly heavy. He looked inside. Neatly done up in separate parcels were the things enumerated. Kimbo put his paws up on the edge of the table and sniffed at the bag, then looked at Mr. Briggs as if to see whether he approved. Briggs looked back at him in a dazed condition and took up the bag again. "What's the meanin' o' this, I'm askin'?" He took a step or two along the hall, for no reason, completely lost in amazement. Kimbo, who was not so affected, ran in front, by chance towards the back stairs. "Ah, you're right, ole cock! Downstairs with this little lot, anyways; then we'll proceed to further investigate these 'ere astoundin' premises."

The companions in crime returned to the kitchen. When they arrived at the base of operations, Briggs put the bag on the table and went straight to the oven. Sure enough, on opening the door of it, he was confronted by the tea and coffee pots. In the spout of the latter was another note: "Dear Love, here they hare, don't make no noise. I'm upstairs not 'ere, 'oping you find things to your likin'. L. N.B. Sperits is in side-board, for Hevvin sake don't go gettin' drunk."

Mr. Briggs sat on the edge of the table and felt as if he had lived his life. Taking the latest find, he wrapped it in an exceedingly large handkerchief, and placed the whole collection under the table.

"Well, now, Kimbo," he said, after a few minutes' reflection, "I'm a-goin' up to see what further mysteries there is to be discovered in this 'ere palace of Maskelyne an' Devant." Followed by the dog, he opened the kitchen door once more and crept up the back stairs. He had got as far as the hall, and was on the point of ascending the stairs leading to the upper portion of the house, when a slight creaking sound, and a glimmer of light on the landing, brought him up very sharply indeed. To his horror, Kimbo ran past him and up the stairs at a good lumbering gallop, making noise enough for a pack of foxhounds. Mr. Briggs gave up no time to thought. In an instant he was through the swing door and down to the kitchen again. Snatching up the bag, he crammed the additional plunder into it and made for the window. As he was in the act of pushing back the catch of the shutters he heard a low whistle outside, and a voice whispered, "A' right, Loo; it's me!"

"Hang it!" muttered Briggs, "I'm copped! Not yet, though, not yet, my buck!" He hurried out of the kitchen and made for the stairs again. "Strewth! I'm too late!" he thought. The door at the top was opening very slowly. Briggs's light was out in a flash, and in another flash its owner was in the cupboard, where there was just room for himself and the barrel of ale. Then he waited results, leaving the chink of the door open, for he felt that he must see what happened. His curiosity was pardonable.

What he saw was this: on the top of the stairs, and descending very slowly, evidently very far from being at her ease, was a girl in a faded dressing-gown, which bore upon its surface an unmistakable "You may have that!" look, which, together with her style of hairdressing, and pretty but rather impertinent face, labelled her, without doubt, ladies' maid. She held a candle in one hand, and with the other grasped the fickle Kimbo by the collar. With great caution she reached the bottom, passing within a few inches of the unhappy Briggs, who was not rendered any the happier by the behaviour of his late friend, who, with unerring instinct, immediately detected his hiding-place and made vigorous efforts to join him. A large drop of perspiration gathered on the end of Mr. Briggs's nose and fell with a splash which seemed to shake the house.

"You come on, you little devil!" said the girl. "I'd like to know 'ow you got out. I'll pay you out for this! Come on, now!" and they disappeared into the kitchen. Briggs was still holding the bag, but he put it down behind the cask and followed, peeping through the door, which she had left a little open.



"Presently a ray of light announced the approach of the enemy."

The girl was standing by the table, on which she had placed the candle. She was looking at the remnants of the supper, and appeared to be surprised; so much so that she let go her hold of Kimbo, who instantly took advantage of this to rejoin Mr. Briggs, not altogether to that gentleman's delight.

Quieting the wanderer's joy at the reunion as well as he could, Briggs continued his watch. The girl was still at the table, and was looking very frightened. "My gracious!" he heard her say, "whatever's the meanin' of this? I left it 'ere. I—— Gracious! it must be James come 'ome! I never 'eard 'im! 'As 'e noticed? No, 'e can't 'ave. 'E'd 'ave roused the 'ouse. Oh, I'm tremblin' like a quiverin' ashbin!" There was a soft tapping at the window. The girl ran to the area door and opened it. A man came in and threw his arms round her.

"Is it all right, Loo?" he asked.

"Yes—no—I dunno. I'm scared to death. I b'lieve James is back. You'd better go."

"Not me. I ain't afraid. Why didn't you open the door before?"

"When?"

"Just now, when you come to the window."

"I 'aven't been to the window."

"Someone 'as. I 'eard 'em."

"Oh, Heavens, it must be James! Do go!"

"Not me, I tell you. Is it all ready?"

"Yes. Oh, I can't stop 'ere! I'm goin' back to bed. Will you be all right?" She was half crying.

"Yes, o'course. You cut. Sharp, now! If I get 'alf a chance, I'll see ye again." He led her to the door. Briggs returned to his hiding-place, carrying Kimbo with him.

The two came out of the kitchen; the girl paused on the lowest stair. "You'll find all ready, the hoven, the 'all table, an' master's 'at-box. I'm terrified to death. Be careful."

"You go on," said the man. "I'll be all right. The hoven first?"

"Yes," she answered, and ran upstairs.

Mr. Briggs laughed silently; he was beginning to enjoy it. Prudence suggested that he should be off whilst he was safe; but there was still the bedroom, which he had reason to believe was worth a visit, and there was his little store under the kitchen table, which he was unable—for the present, at any rate—to get at. Besides, he was anxious to see and enjoy what future entertainment there might be provided. When he returned to his post behind the kitchen door, he observed that the rival explorer was ruefully regarding the dismantled supper-table, especially the empty jug. The man seemed quite hurt.

"Blow that there James!" he said. "'E might 'a' left a drop. 'Owever, I'll find some d'reckly. Now, then, for this 'ere hoven." He went to that receptacle and threw the door open, not without some noise.

Mr. Briggs threw up his hands in disgust and, with great contempt, muttered "Hammertoor!"

The man stared at the empty oven in wonder.

"What's the meanin' o' this?" he exclaimed. "No supper, nor yet no bloomin' nest eggs! What's that gal bin doin'? She must 'a' put 'em all upstairs." He looked round for a moment, then, sitting down, took off his boots and made towards the door.

"Bust a frog, if 'e ain't a-goin' to leave 'is boots!" said the disgusted Briggs, as he retreated up the stairs. "'E's sure to stop at them cupboards afore 'e comes up," and he continued his watch through the swing door at the top. He was right. The man opened the first door. Seeing nothing but the brooms, he passed on to the second. "'Strewth!" thought the watcher, "I've left my bag be'ind the cask! That's your fault," he said to the dog, who, being by this time somewhat fatigued, was asleep in his arms. Seeing this, Mr. Briggs found time to visit the dining-room, where he placed the slumberer on the sofa and cautiously resumed his espial. The man was standing in the cupboard, with a bull's-eye lantern in one hand and a formidable jemmy in the other.

At this sight Mr. Briggs was so much amused that he nearly betrayed himself.

"Oh, crimes!" he muttered. "What's 'e a-goin' to do with them? 'E ought to 'a' bin a pleeceman. 'E's a-goin' to make a desprit attack on the cask with that there crowbar!" The man put down the jemmy and helped himself to a glass of ale, and then another. "That's right, my lad; you keep on at that game. What's 'e doin' now? Blowed if 'e ain't loaded 'isself up with them plated forks. Oh, burst me! this is too much, this is! 'E ain't found my bag, an' 'e's 'avin' another glass. 'E'll be comin' up now. Ah! I thought so. I'm off! I want to see 'im take a hinventory of the 'all." Briggs retreated to the principal staircase, not without a glance to the upper landing. All being quiet, he took a seat on the top stair and waited. Presently a ray of light announced the approach of the enemy. 'E ain't dowsed that there searchlight, I notice. If there's a copper 'andy, 'e'll think the 'ouse is afire. It makes me feel quite young again, watchin' this 'ere Dick Turpin. I'm blowed if 'e ain't a fair treat!" The light and its bearer came along the hall and arrived at the table. They paused there, and Mr. Briggs rolled from side to side in agony. "Not 'ere!" said the astonished man. "Is she 'avin' a game with me? I've a good mind to go up and wring 'er bloomin' neck off, bringin' me 'ere for nothink. She's that scared she dunno what she's doin'." He went to the dining-room door and disappeared. Briggs ran lightly downstairs and looked in. His unworthy rival stood in the middle of the room, throwing his light here and there. Finding nothing portable, he scratched his head perplexedly; then he observed the open sideboard, and, going to it, was again disappointed till he saw the spirit-stand, which he took out. "P'raps this'll 'elp me understand things a bit more clear," he remarked, helping himself freely.

"No doubt, no doubt," said Briggs to himself sarcastically. The better to think it out at his ease, he put the stand on the table, and, glass in hand, sat down upon the sofa. He also sat down upon Kimbo. With a loud yelp the frightened animal wriggled

from under the still more frightened burglar and tore up the stairs, whining piteously. He arrived at the first door on the landing and scratched vigorously. At the same time there came a low, cautious knock at the front door. The man in the dining-room snatched up his lantern and dived under the table. Mr. Briggs retreated rapidly to the other side of the swing door, and with a remarkably uneasy mind, awaited events. The first thing that occurred was the opening of the door above; then a girl's voice was heard addressing the dog in hushed, rapid tones.

"Kimbo! Kimbo! what is it? Oh, you naughty puppy! what are you doing? Come in, sir!" Then to herself apparently: "Oh, what shall I do? He must have wakened them all." Again the low knocking at the front door, then the girl's voice. "Oh, Heavens! there's Arthur! I must go down. Oh, how wicked I am!"

Another door opened on the top landing, and another girl's voice: "Is that you, Miss Nellie?"—a very frightened voice this last one.

"Yes," came the answer. "Here's Kimbo loose. I don't know what's the matter with him. It's all right, though. You needn't come down, Louisa. Go to bed."

"Oh, I daresn't, miss! I'm terrified to death!" said Louisa.

"Nonsense! Go to bed at once! You'll wake the whole house. Shut your door."

There was a faint "Oh, Heavens!" and the door shut.

Mr. Briggs was in a quandary. He felt that he ought to bring his visit to a close, but the new arrival outside the front door blocked the retreat both by that and the area. He felt that it must be the police, and yet the soft knocking seemed to contradict this. He remained where he was—there was no choice. He wondered how the man in the dining-room was feeling. Someone was coming downstairs, carrying a candle. Briggs, peeping through into the hall, saw a young lady cross to the front door. "Is that you, Arthur?" she whispered. The answer was evidently satisfactory, for she opened the door a very little way and admitted a young gentleman. Briggs thought that the house seemed a very popular one.



"The young gentleman kissed the young lady."

The young gentleman kissed the young lady, whispering "My darling! my brave darling!" "Oh, do be quiet!" she said. "Kimbo's been making such a noise! He's shut up in my room. You mustn't stay many minutes. Come into the library, and don't make a sound." They went into the room opposite the dining-room.

"Now," said Mr. Briggs, "is my time." He was on the point of descending the stairs to the kitchen, but he stopped. "The bedroom," he reflected. "Dare I? It won't take a minute; they're safe for a bit, at least. I'll chance it." He was upstairs in record time. Passing the first door, he heard the complaining Kimbo. He whispered "Lie down!" through the keyhole, and passed on and into the second room. The first thing he saw standing on the dressing-table was "master's 'at box." He opened it and found a miscellaneous collection of jewellery, which he lost no time in pocketing; there was a note, but he didn't waste time over that. Long before one could say "Jack Robinson" he was descending the stairs again. He extinguished

his light on the way, so that the hall was in darkness. As he turned at the foot of the stairs he came end-on against the other man, who was just emerging from the dining-room. There were no words, but the struggle which began at once was wonderfully energetic. Mr. Briggs, who was not so thoroughly surprised as his opponent, had the upper hand, and after they had waltzed round a time or two they fell heavily, with that gentleman on top.

"Lemme go, for Heaven's sake! I ain't got nothink! Lemme go, awficer, an' I'll put you up to somethink!"

In an instant a light dawned on the mind of Mr. Briggs, in the same instant a light dawned on his body. The first came from the man's words, the second from the library door, which was open.

"Yes, I'll let you go; you'll go along o' me, my man." He saw that the other took him for a policeman or detective, and he was well pleased.

"What is it? Oh, what is it?" came from the young lady, who was standing horror-stricken at the open door.

"Yes, what is it?" asked her companion, who was not exactly comfortable himself.

"That's what I want to know, miss," said Briggs with an official air.

"Are you a policeman?" said the gentleman, going by Briggs's tone.

"Not me—I mean yes—that is, no. I'm a detective, that's what I am. Fortunately I 'appened to be on the premises—that is, passin' by 'em—an' I see the back door open. I entered in the execution of my dooty, an' apprehended the prisoner. Get up, will you?" commanded Detective Briggs, dragging his victim to his feet. At this stage, Louisa ran downstairs crying and threw herself at Briggs's feet.

"Oh, please let him go, sir. It's all my fault. He didn't mean no 'arm. He'll give everythink back. Miss Nellie, he will indeed."

"'E'll be clever if he does," thought Mr. Briggs.

Miss Nellie looked from one to the other in a helpless manner, and felt very sorry for herself. Not knowing quite what to do, she launched out at Louisa, feeling that to be familiar ground. "What do you mean, Louisa?"

"Oh, he's my young man, miss!" said the wretched girl. "'E ain't took nothing, 'ave you, Jo?"

"No," said Jo sullenly. He didn't mention that he hadn't had the chance.

"That remains to be seen; anything in the way of language made use of now will be used as hevidence," gave out Briggs, in his official character. "Will you be pleased to look around, miss or sir, and see if anythink has bin disturbed?"

The lady looked in a dazed way at the ceiling and the stair carpet, and shook her head. Then she turned to Louisa again.

"What's he doing here at this time of night?" she asked severely.

Louisa said nothing; she looked at her mistress, and then at the young gentleman. After that both women were silent.

The young gentleman suggested that they had better go into the dining-room and have a little whisky.

"Yes, sir, yes, very proper," said Mr. Briggs.

So they all went. The dismantled look of the room struck them.

"Why, where's the silver?" shrieked Miss Nellie.

"Ah, where's the silver?" echoed Briggs, shaking his prisoner like a rattle.

"I dunno," muttered the unfortunate wretch. "I couldn't find none."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mr. Briggs and the young gentleman simultaneously.

"This," went on the astute detective, "concludes the hevidence. If you'll get a bit o' rope, sir, I'll secure the prisoner an' go for assistance."

The rope having been procured, Mr. Briggs bound his victim securely to a chair.

"I'll leave you to watch 'im, sir. The front door is fastened; I'll step out by the back one. P'raps you'll be good enough to let me in when I return."

"I'll watch him safe enough," said the young gentleman. "You know the way?"

"I'll find it, sir. Don't no one leave the room, please. I'll be as quick as I can; the p'leece is difficult to find at night, sometimes."

Immediately afterwards a figure issued from the area gate and walked swiftly down the street, carrying a carpenter's bag. At the corner of the square it paused and muttered to itself. "Blowed if I 'aven't bin an' left the dog be'ind!"

HIS LADY OF AN HOUR.

By G. B. LANCASTER.

THE God of Work is not merciful to all men alike, though they bring him their muscle and sinew and the eager strength of their manhood. Lew Holderness had brought these things many times without avail during the last seven months fruitless searching for a billet; and when Steel, skipper of the pearling-brig *Aurora*, lifted him suddenly out of his despair, and pitchforked him into position of second mate aboard the *Aurora*, Lew went out and pawned the old signet ring which had been pawned five times before, and then turned into the Wharf Hotel to celebrate.

"Five hours before I need be aboard," he said. "Five hours! Heavens! A man can turn a town inside out in less time than that."

He was going to do something which would affect him rather more, but he did not know it. Life has a way of springing her tests on men and then sitting back to see how they take them.

The very ring of his feet lifted the eyes of the men in the bar, and Tommy Ives turned with the usual joke that had worn cruelly threadbare in these last months.

"Goin' to shout us, Lew? Mine's a gin cocktail."

"Yes." Lew pulled himself up on the counter and grinned at them with his eyes lit. "Yes. Make you all drunk if you like. Fill up, Joe. And if there's a man here who's been to the Thursday Island pearling-beds just lately, I'll make him blind drunk."

Five voices claimed the distinction, and Lew plucked from their midst a slim, wizened man with a bent leg, and brought him up to the bar.

"Wade in, Captain," he said, "an' tell me some o' the truth you know, an' all the lies. Ah—h! But you smell o' the shell, though."

The whole room smelt of it, and of the salt sea, and the tar, and the fruit-laden boats in the river without. And Lew sat on the counter snuffing it up, with his heart lifting for desire of the groaning rollers under a boat laden to the taffrail, and of the deep-sea wind screaming through the rigging at midnight. And the world seemed to him suddenly a very good place, and vivid with life and delight; and the haze of yellow light through the cloud of smoke and breath was a beacon of hope to his heart

There was a little stir about the bar-parlour door. Then the barman looked at Lew, grinning.

"A lady waitin' to see yer," he said, "in there. She would not give her name at all."

Lew slid off the counter promptly, and the questions hit him.

"Not expectin' that, was yer?" "Is that Aurora herself, Lew?" "Whose young lady is she, Lew?"

This last was Jimmy Taylor, from the *Condamine*. And the company roared approval, for Lew Holderness would fight a man and make love to a woman with equal delight, and all the town knew it. Lew laughed over his shoulder, with the light striking the bare column of his throat and the gay, virile face above it.

"Not yours, my innocent," he said. And the company approved again. For girls were scarce in the township, and Jimmy was frankly ill-favoured.

"If it was, I'd not let her be speakin' wi' you!" he shouted. Lew wheeled where he stood. His voice was level as his eyes. But it was the cold, deadly level of steel.

"If you'd like to prove that," he said; "you needn't wait till the girl turns up."

Jimmy looked at him, hesitated, dropped his eyes.

"Guess p'raps I'll wait," he muttered.

"Guess p'raps you're pretty safe if you do," returned Lew drily.

And then he turned in at the bar-parlour door and shut it behind him.

A girl stood by the table with one hand on the shabby oilcloth, and the flicker of the gas-bracket made a half-light over her. Lew halted, holding the door-knob, and he stared at her with a swift lifting of his eyebrows. For she did not at all belong to the order of women whom he had seen in the

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township or in this dingy little room, with its greasy wall-paper and its smell of stale smoke and its fag-ends of cigarettes. There was fur about her stately shoulders, and fur on the well-carried, tall head, and her voice held the slow, trained charm of a woman born to high places.

"Mr. Holderness," she said. "You know my brother—Charlie Deland? He wrote telling me of his illness and giving his address care of you. I have come up to nurse him. Will you tell me where he is, please?"

At midday Lew had helped the township doctor put Charlie Deland in his coffin. He lay there still, waiting for the morrow, and those who had spoken of Charlie's last move seemed to approve of it as they had not approved many of his former ones. For the first time Lew regretted it. He stared at the girl, and his lips went suddenly dry.

The girl drew herself up. Lew was a tall man; but her long-lashed, dark eyes met his levelly.

"You are Mr. Holderness?" she demanded.

"Yes." Lew was reaching out for his wits rapidly.

"And you know where my brother is?"

"I—I—yes."

There is some doubt as to whether the body still constitutes the man when the soul is taken from it. Lew did not care to hazard an opinion concerning the resting-place of Charlie Deland's soul.

"Then you will take me to him at once, if you please," said the girl, and gathered her furs round her.

It was the manner of a woman accustomed to command—by virtue of her beauty and her social standing and her birth. Lew recognised this, and it delighted him, for he had not seen such things so closely before. He turned to the side-door leading into the street. Then he paused. In the shanty which he shared with Charlie Deland were loneliness and quiet, and the little back room where the body lay would take her grief and hide it from the eyes of men. But it seemed to Lew that there could be few more brutal things than to take this girl, unprepared, into that silent room. He looked at her again, stammering for words.

"T—there's no hurry, is there?" he said.

He could not well have said a worse thing, and he knew it when the girl's indignant eyes met his.

"Come!" she said, and swept past him to the pavement and the chill of the sea-breathing night. And Lew obeyed, as all men obeyed when she commanded them.

The moonlight flung their shadows black before them on the rough stones. A pale nimbus showed round the head of each shadow as it shows only in lands where a white night is vivid as day. Lew had never by any law of his life deserved a nimbus before, but in some vague way he was qualifying for it just now; for all the chivalry and the pity of his nature were waking to help Charlie Deland's sister in the sorrow that was coming to her.

He glanced at her as they turned together up the little side street where a cow, cropping the rusty grass, raised her head and blew a sweet-scented inquiry at them, and what he saw troubled him distinctly. For her proud mouth was quivering, and the glint of tears unshed was on the dark lashes, and something infinitely childish and appealing suggested itself in the little curl of fair hair round her ear.

Then Lew girded his loins and buckled on the breast-plate of truth.

"Charlie never expected you to come," he said.

"It is customary to prefer nursing one's relation oneself instead of leaving him to strangers," said the girl, looking straight before her.

"Oh . . . I say. I'm not a stranger to Charlie."

"You didn't appear to know much about him just now."

This took Lew in the wind, and he had no counter. He kept silence until the row of squalid tin shanties lessened and hedges of prickly-pear raised their fleshy, flat leaves along the track. Then he said—

"I know as much about him as anyone does now."

The girl wheeled on him. Her eyes—they were very beautiful eyes—sent a shiver through Lew to his boot-heels. For he had got to put shadow into them.

"That is epigrammatic," she said suavely. But Lew, interpreting into his own language, knew that it meant: "Are you quite sober?"

"Yes," he said hurriedly. "I mean—yes, of course. And—er—here's the door."

She did not hesitate as he pushed the door wide, showing the gaping blackness within, and a thrill of admiration of her courage ran along his veins. Then he followed her into the little weather-board living-room, struck a match that quivered faint light over its bachelor untidiness, and stood a moment with sudden remembrance twitching his heart-strings. By lawful rule

of the game he should have been packing his effects by now; and in two hours the key would be left in the landlord's hands, and the shanty would again be to let. For the other tenant did not intend to come back any more than Lew did.

Then he crossed to the shelf, lit the small lamp with its broken chimney, and turned to her. The collar of his shirt did not touch his throat, but he felt as though hands choked him. Never in all his days had he been nearer cowardice.

"I—have something to say to you before you see him," he blurted.

The girl threw off her cloak, and the long, supple lines of her figure were perfect as her face.

"Yes?" she said a little wearily.

"It is something that I find it rather difficult to tell you," said Lew, and the tone of his voice brought her eyes fairly on him.

His dress was rough, his hair was too long, and the firm, square chin was unshaven. But what the girl read out of the whole gave her trust in this stranger of the night.

"Is he—drunk?" she said steadily. "You need not be afraid to tell me of that."

"No. But—— Well, I don't know how long it is since he wrote you. He never spoke of his home-folk. But he has been ill a good while, and—and I'm afraid you'll find him changed, you know."

The girl put out her hands gropingly. They caught at a chair-back and rested there. Lew noted the glitter of rings, many rings and very costly, on her white fingers, and he wondered what manner of woman this was who put such temptation in the way of an unknown man.

"Tell me," she said, and her breath was shortened.

"He has been awfully ill," said Lew, standing stiffly. "And he had suffered a—a lot. He—he was bound to, you know, after the—the way he had—had fooled with himself, you know. I—he——"

"What do you mean?" said the girl, dropping her words slowly. Her big eyes were rounded and full of light. They seemed to grow bigger in the little room, and Lew's tongue was dumb before them. "Do you mean that Charlie is dead?"

The words dropped slow and detached again. They hit Lew like separate hailstones and unnerved him badly.

"I—I—— On my soul, it's best for him," he said. "If you knew—if you'd seen him—oh, good Heavens!"

Lew had seen women faint on the stage many times. But they did not do as this girl did. Possibly it was because he caught her before she reached the floor, and also because the sense of criticism was not in him just then. But he had to lay her on the floor, among the uncleaned boots and the crumpled newspapers and the riding-gear that had been Charlie's, and he had to leave her there whilst he dashed out to the water-butt with a cracked jug, stumbling over many things by the way, and leaving a trail of drippings as he came back to her.

She was the fairest, most delicate thing that Lew's hands had touched in all their thirty years, and the fine hair about her forehead twisted in little curls round his fingers as he swabbed water over her clumsily. They seemed to twist round his brain, round his heart, and the unknown fragrance that hung about her put her apart from the coarse tobacco-and-drink smells of his daily life into a strange, sweet maidenhood of her own. His teeth were shut, and there were drops on his forehead when she opened her eyes again, meeting his straightly.

"Charlie?" she whispered.

Lew got his arm round her, lifting her up against his shoulder.

"Drink this," he said, and his voice was curt by reason of the feeling that shook him.

She put her lips to the cracked jug and drank. Then Lew, watching with eager eyes, saw memory come back, whitening her face, and drawing deep lines on its softness.

"When?" she whispered.

Lew hesitated. It was better to lie; but he could not lie under those eyes.

"This morning," he said.

He felt the shudder run through her, and the lines on the softness grew deeper. But her eyes were dry, and this frightened Lew. He had heard that under great stress women needs must cry or go mad. She pushed him off and stood up. But she tottered on her feet.

"Take me to him," she said.

Lew glanced towards the inner door, latched with a piece of greasy string. He was desperately afraid, and in his fear he stammered out some words without meaning. Then, with a quick oath half said in his throat, he snatched up the lamp and followed her, for the white, shining fingers were fumbling with the greasy string.

It was a little, unlined lean-to, with moon-beams straggling through the nail-holes in the roof of corrugated iron and pouring in a soft, radiant flood between the top of the rough wall and the stringers. The floor was

tramped earth, littered with rubbish, and, flat on the floor, in his coffin roughed out of stringy-bark, Charlie Deland slept more peacefully than he had slept since Lew knew him.

The squalor of all this had not struck home to Lew before. It was a part of his daily life, and he had seen many men go to their last sleep with less of Death's majesty about them than Charlie Deland held now. But when the girl made the three steps that brought her to the room-centre, and dropped on her knees by the coffin, and drew the covering from the face that Lew had hid without any sorrow, a sudden shame burnt Lew in that he had brought her here to see this. Then fiercer shame scorched him that he himself should stay to see the brother and sister meet. He set down the lamp on an empty box, crossed to the next room, found a seat of some kind, and sat waiting, with his head in his hands.

It was the keenest purgatory that life had given him yet. For sobs came from the lean-to, and piteous, broken words, and girlish, caressing speech such as Charlie Deland had never deserved this last six years. Lew bit his lips, not daring to deafen his ears, for the fear that she might faint again. And the broken voice went on, and the tearing agony of the sobs, until Lew's nails were clenched into his hands and sweat stood on his forehead. By all his manhood, by all the pity and the chivalry deep-sunk in him somewhere, he wanted to go in there and to take the girl in his arms and to give her such comfort as living, breathing tenderness could give.

Silence came at last, intermittently and slowly. Then Lew looked through the door noiselessly, with his face twitching. The sleep of exhaustion had caught her where she knelt with her arm thrown across her dead brother and her cheek laid down to the edge of the wood. The pale of her face and her dress in the moonlight made Lew think of an angel that he had seen in some graveyard, and his heart leapt up in anger that she should come to such as Charlie Deland. Then a knocking at the outer door wheeled him to it with quicker anger in his eyes. For no living man had the right to pry here on this night.

He had forgotten all the life outside the room until the world beyond the outer door showed him the *Aurora's* first mate, with the smell of the sea heavy on him. And the *Aurora's* first mate was uncivil.

"What the diversified dickens d'you mean by keeping us waiting in this diversified way?" he began. And then Lew drew the latch with a click behind him, and stood out on the rough footpath, with the call of the rising sea and the sea-smell to help him through with this.

"When does the *Aurora* sail?" he asked.

"She should 'a' gone an hour ago, an' you know that as well as the next man. But we've been turning the town upside down for you. They said at the pub that you'd cleared off with some girl. Well, I tell you, the skipper hasn't any time for such foolery. You're to be aboard the old hooker in five minutes, or he's taking on Joe Hanson. So now you know it."

From the river came a Kanaka chorus, where a native crew brought the anchor of an outgoing hulk to the cathead. Lew could see her lights blinking red through the white of the moonlight, and almost his feet could feel the throb of her engines as her heart beat fast in eagerness to reach the sea. In the gutter outside the hotel at the corner a man sat with his head against the horse-trough, talking to himself in the peculiar, solemn tones of the half-drunk, and from the bar itself came a burst of noisy laughter. It was the old, stale, squalid life that Lew's soul loathed, and that his body and soul ached to leave. He stood still. He heard what the sea was saying to him, and his heart answered. But within the lean-to behind him was something that spoke louder. There was no woman in all the place whom he could bring to Charlie Deland's sister to help her through with the morrow. And very assuredly there was no man. He looked at the mate.

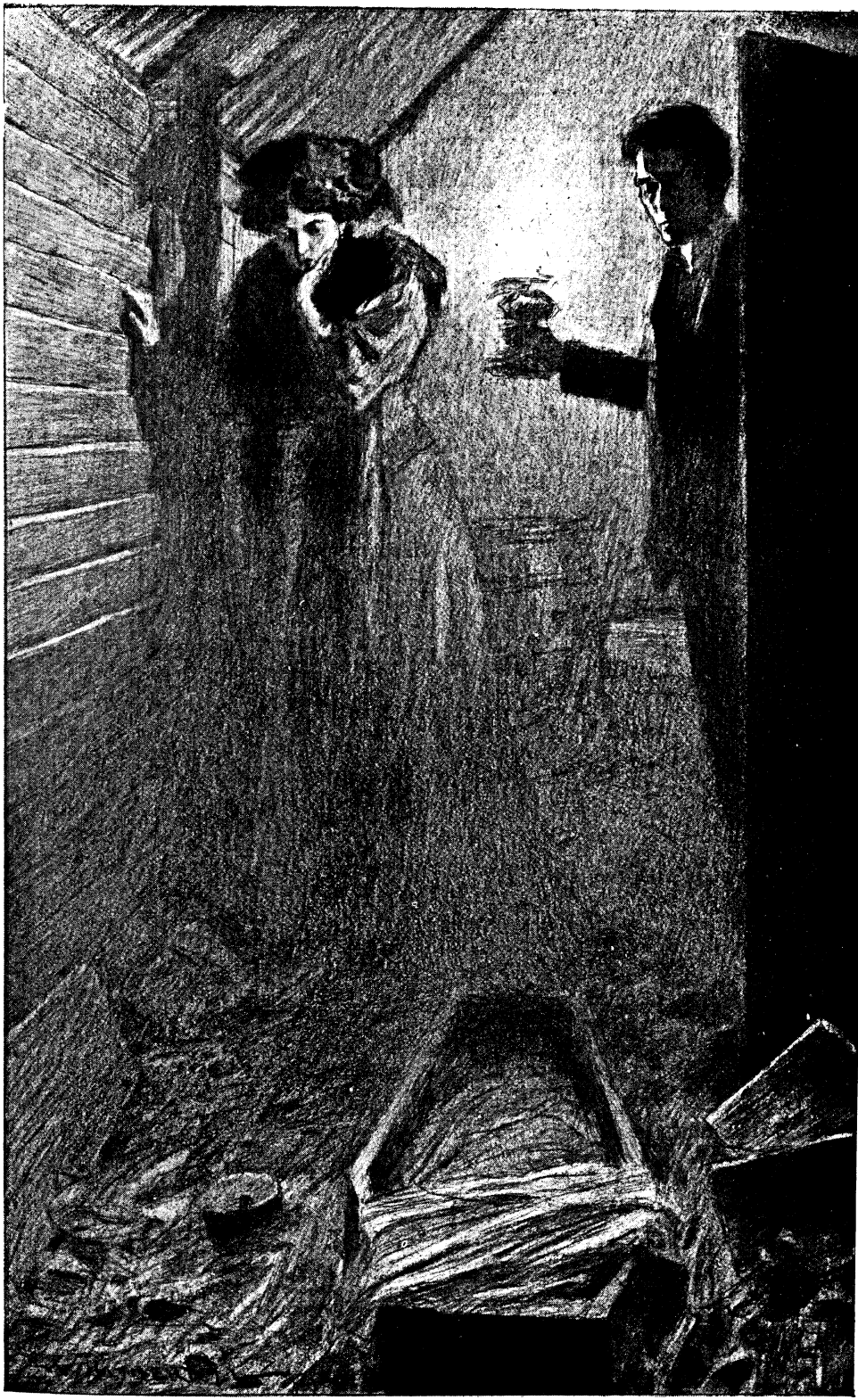
"Tell the skipper he can have Joe Hanson," he said. "Joe's passable when he's been safe at sea for a week."

The mate objected luridly. For he knew that Lew was more than passable even from the beginning. Lew backed to the door again.

"Go an' spring that on Jow," he said. "I've no use for your comets to-night, Dicey. So-long."

Then he shut the door on the amazed first mate, and stood very still in the little dark room, with hands closed and eyes staring at nothing.

"What's the betting that it isn't the track again?" he said. "And a stone out o' one of those rings of hers would keep me in tucker an' baccy for a year. Well, it's a queer world. And I haven't got a brown to buy her a mouthful with. I wonder if there's a blessed thing here that I could put up the spout?"



"He snatched up the lamp and followed her."

He struck a match up his leg and glanced round. Then he picked Charlie Deland's bridle out of the litter and felt it over, until the light went out, burning his fingers.

"Fair dues," he said, "I might raise a bob or two on it at Milligan's. And Charlie won't want it again. Besides, she has lost me my billet."

But there was no resentment in him when he brought her strong, coarse tea and fat, heavy buns in the glare of the morning light. Instead there was an anxious tenderness and a clumsy reverence such as touched her to tears more than once and forced her to eat and to drink that he might be content. Her skin was fair and unlined as a child's in the merciless light, and her dark eyes were heavy, and the brave smile on her lips hurt Lew more sharply than her tears of the last night.

"There's the *Gunyah* goes south in three hours," he said. "She's a decent little boat, and I think you'd be all right on her. Shall I fix up your ticket for you?"

"Will—will——?"

Lew nodded gravely.

"It was to be at ten sharp," he said. "The parson is going on to Bullswool."

It was not necessary to add that the parson and all the rest of the township were going to a race-meeting; but Lew had something more to say.

"It—it won't be a very first-class show, I'm afraid," he told her. "We don't keep much style up here, you know, and Charlie . . . . he wasn't very well known, you know."

Charlie was as well known as Milligan's whisky-barrel, which he had resembled too closely to gain the reverence of his fellows. The girl's lips quivered again.

"I understand," she said. "Thank you."

Then Lew went out and beat up the township to do last honours to Charlie Deland. And when all was done, and he stood with her on the deck of the dirty little *Gunyah*, watching the last crates of bananas and the last bales of cotton swing inship, he felt some pride in his management of affairs. For sixty of the townsfolk had followed Charlie and the girl and Lew to the little barren cemetery beside the sea, and there had been no unseemly jubilation such as had been confidently expected.

The girl had said little to Lew in these hours. But his hand had held hers whilst the little parson rapidly committed Charlie to the earth whereon he had grovelled so long, and her shoulder touched his arm as she leaned back in the deck-chair which the captain had sent from his own cabin.

Suddenly she looked up at him, and the smile in the dark eyes quickened Lew's breath. For already he would have given more than was ever likely to be his for the certainty that he should see the girl again.

"You don't want me to put it into words, do you?" she asked. "I think you are one of those who understand. I shall never forget you, and I shall never cease to be grateful for all that you have done for me and mine. But there are no real words to tell it in."

"I don't want you to put it into words," he said. "But . . . may I come and see you? Some day may I come south to your home and see you?"

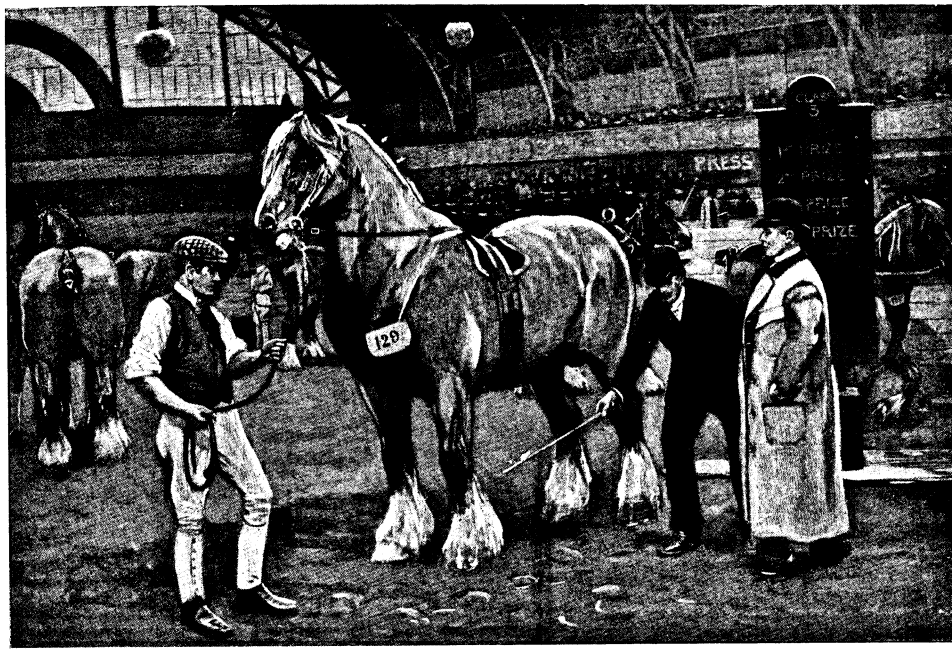
His voice was hoarse and his eyes were eager. This girl had brought him nearer the finer things of life than ever his feet had taken him before, and he was jarred out of contentment with his lot. She put her hand on his, and the gleam of the rings called a passing Kanaka's eyes to her sharply.

"Indeed you may," she said. "We shall always be glad to see you, my husband and I. Yes, come; he will thank you better than I can for all that you did for me . . . and for Charlie."

Her eyes brimmed, and she looked past him to the tumbling, shining sea. Lew straightened, with his hands shut as though to meet a blow. But the blow had been struck. For a little space he stood, unmoving and unspeaking. Then bare feet raced on the deck; the anchor swung dripping to the cathead, and Lew crossed the gangway at the last possible moment. He had given her no good-byes that he knew of. But as the *Gunyah* nosed round in the mud the girl leaned over the bulwark with her handkerchief blown out on the wind. It was a little thing of delicate lace, and Lew knew that the same faint scent clung to it. His lips twitched with half-laughter at himself as he bared his head to her under the hot sun.

The *Gunyah* went on noisily, belching black smoke and squattering her broad beam in the water. But Lew saw her dimly. The eyes of his memory were watching the *Aurora* running downwind to the pearling-grounds. Then he shook his shoulders and turned back to the town.

"Well," he said. "But I'd have done it all the same. I'd have done it. An' I wonder if it'll ever strike you that I don't know your name or where you live, my lady of the sweetest lips that ever a man wanted to kiss—and didn't?"



THE SHIRE HORSE SHOW AT THE AGRICULTURAL HALL: A LIKELY PRIZE-WINNER BEFORE THE JUDGES.
From a drawing by David B. Waters.

HORSE SHOWS

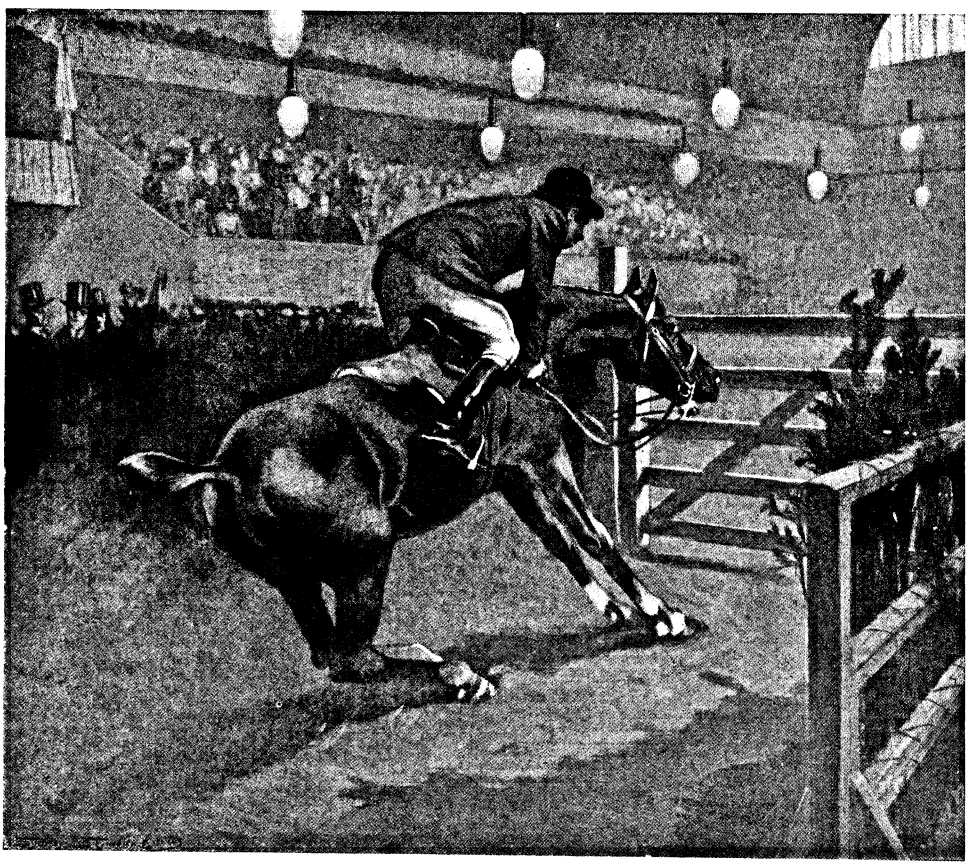
IN PURPOSE AND PRACTICE.

HORSE SHOWS are a natural sequence of that love for horses which has been a leading characteristic of the English nation from time immemorial. Their primary object, like that of racing, is to encourage horse-breeding and to improve the breed of horses. Whether that object is invariably attained is doubtful. The question is a technical one, which only horse-breeders can decide, and which I will not discuss. The fact remains that horse shows are a national institution, popular with all classes from the prince to the peasant. Of the thousands of people who attend these shows, probably not ten per cent. attend them for the purpose of business. They go because they like to see a good horse and a good rider, with the extra inducement of being participators in a fashionable social function and enjoying the fun of the fair. Mr. Labouchere once stated in the House of Commons that, though he habitually went to Epsom on Derby Day, he had never seen the race run; and on the same principle many people habitually attend horse shows to whom the points of a horse are an unknown quantity. It has been my business to attend horse shows for more years than I like to count, and I constantly see the same faces and always the same types of character. Now, my experience is that, wherever people are gathered together, folks are funny. The man who said that we English take our pleasures sadly was guilty of slander and knew nothing about English humour. Let me describe some of the amusement which I derive from horse shows—or, rather, from the people who attend them.

Imagine two ladies who puzzled and amused me for many months, until an accident betrayed to me their avocation. At first I thought that they were the daughters of a hunting squire with pronounced ideas regarding sporting feminine attire. But then they never took any interest in the horses, but apparently confined their attention to human society and to the clothing of the feminine portion of the same. On one

occasion journalistic duties took me to Exeter Hall, where I saw one of the ladies in a different costume. Then the secret came out. They were reporting for a ladies' paper. One did the sketches and the other did the scribbling, and both were entirely ignorant of anything appertaining to horseflesh. But though ladies may deceive with impunity, men get punished for deceit. Here is a man who regularly haunts horse

gentlemanly appearance and a superficial knowledge of horseflesh, supplied by the veterinary books in the Reading Room of the British Museum. Sometimes, however, he overacts his part and pretends to a knowledge of horsemanship. On one occasion I assumed the *rôle* of a purchaser and insisted upon his riding the horse which I was supposed to be anxious to purchase. The vendor also insisted, and the result was

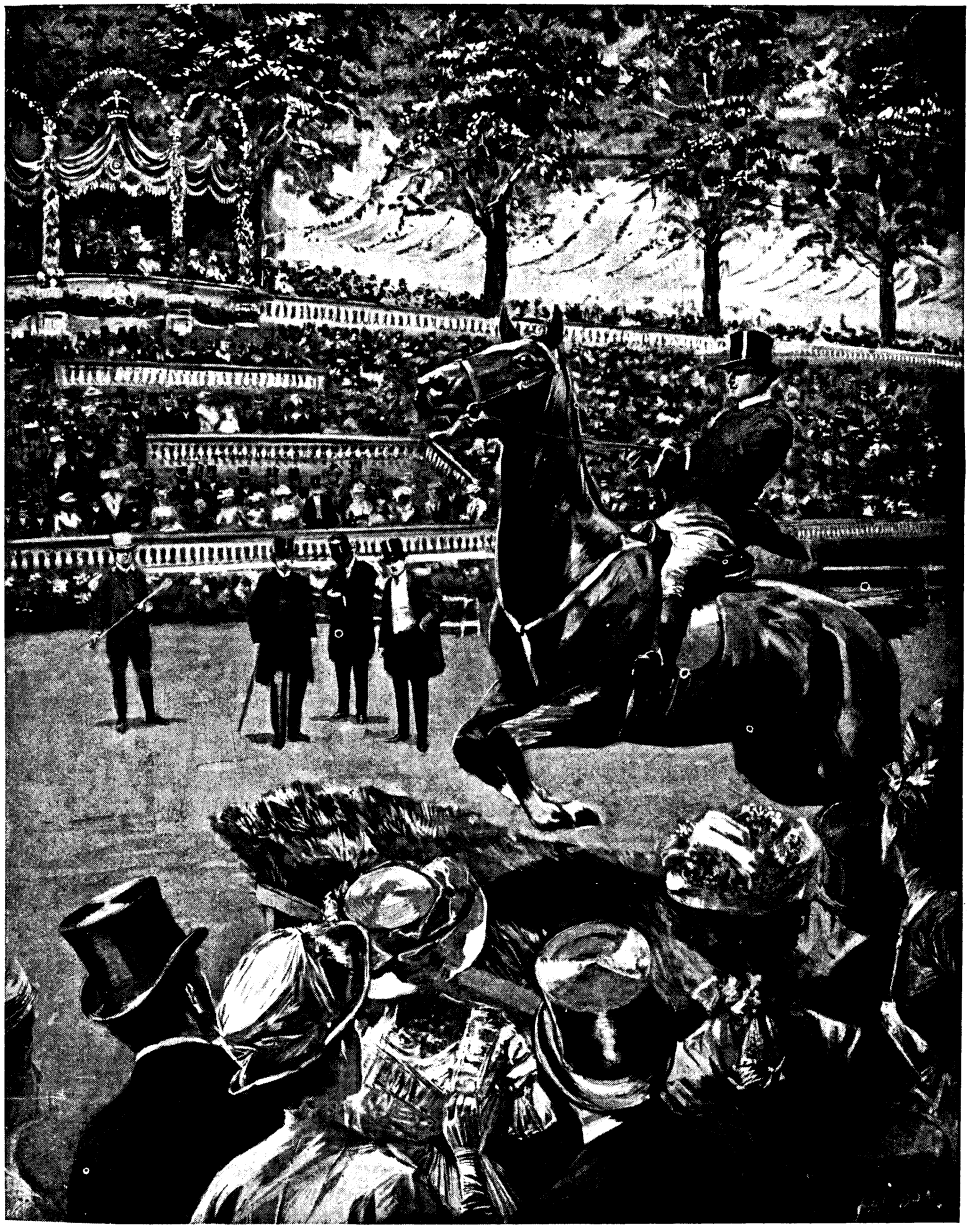


A "REFUSAL" AT THE HUNTER SHOW AT ISLINGTON.

From a drawing by Sydney Seymour Lucas.

shows. To hear him talk you would think that he knew a little more about hunting than the late Duke of Beaufort; and he manages to earn a substantial income by the use of his tongue. He does not frequent the big shows, such as those held at Islington and Richmond, but he is to be found at most of the smaller shows held in hunting counties, where he negotiates sales, taking a commission from vendor and purchaser. His stock-in-trade consists of a limited to two minutes—but it was very funny.

Then we have the man, born of poor but dishonest parents, who has inherited both parental characteristics. He has reduced the perversion of the truth to a fine art, and the manner in which he touts for odd jobs is worthy of a novelist's attention, especially when he scents a likely employer in a jovial farmer. Most of these men are grooms who have been discharged without a character;



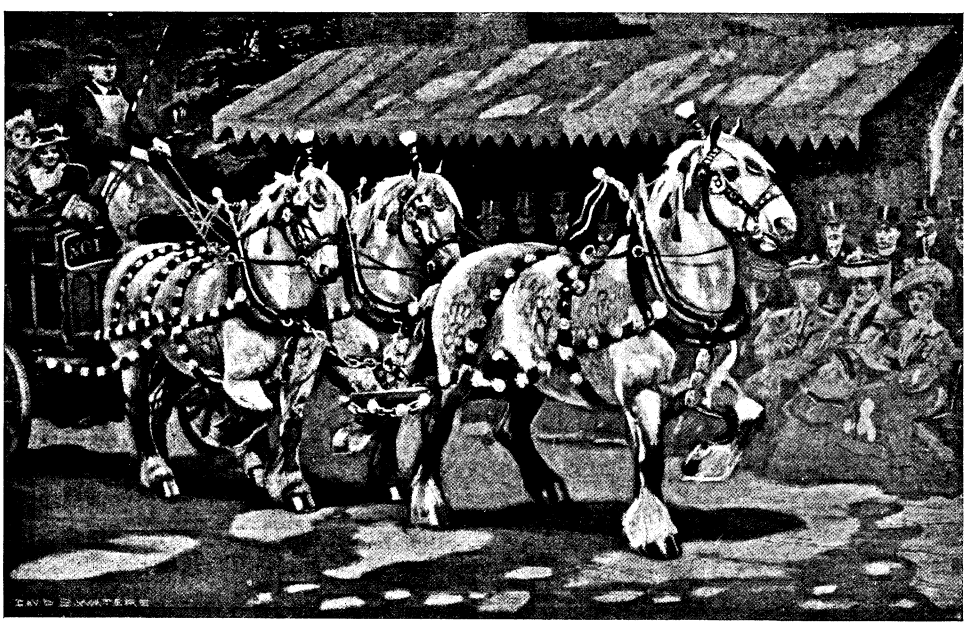
JUDGING HUNTERS AT THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW AT OLYMPIA.

From a drawing by Charles M. Sheldon.

but they are often useful, for there is not a horse-coping trick which they do not know. Of course, horse-coping, or faking horses, is soon detected at the big shows, where horses are subjected to a veterinary examination before they are allowed to enter the ring; but at small country shows it is different. Let us consider the difference between big shows, like those held at Islington, and country shows.

It is a complaint amongst small breeders, such as farmers, that they have no chance at the big shows. The fees are large in comparison with the prizes, and the prices realised in the auction-yard are small. There is also a predilection amongst certain

judges in favour of certain fashions, and only the large breeders can afford to breed in accordance with that predilection. I have often heard the comment passed upon a horse, that he was bred only for the show-ring, and I have known horses which were useless for ordinary work outside the stud, more especially Hackneys, win honours at our big shows some years ago. The good looks of such animals are undeniable, and appeal to the spectators; but the high-actioned animal who puts his feet down within a few inches of the place whence he took them up, who canters like a rocking-horse, and who could not trot ten miles



THE LONDON CART-HORSE PARADE ON WHIT-MONDAY IN REGENT'S PARK.

From a drawing by David B. Waters.

within the hour, can be of little service outside Hyde Park. Again, take the so-called hunters' classes at these big shows and compare the entries with the horses which are ridden over Leicestershire. Few hunting men would care to ride the generality of show horses over a stiff country, nor would their owners care that they should be hunted regularly by first-flight men. They have to earn their corn in the show-ring, and not in the hunting-field. Of course, I am not speaking now of the jumpers at Olympia, many of which are as good over a country as they are in the show-ring. The show hunter at many big shows often reminds me of a professional acrobat in a travelling circus, who comes into the ring to do the turn for which he has been specially trained. He has been schooled to leap certain jumps, such as the wooden "stone wall" and the "double"—jumps which he would seldom be called upon to leap in the hunting-field. Watch him and his rider as they come round the show-ring. They look nearly as graceful as the acrobat in new tights, and perform their jumping feats with a neat dexterity which wins the applause of the crowd, and especially of the women. I often wonder what would happen to horse and rider if they found themselves in a quick thing over Leicestershire.

"Where do the riders come from?" was the question once asked me by a country cousin. He was surprised when I told him that they often hailed from the fashionable riding-schools. With few exceptions they are professionals, who have to work hard for their living in various ways. You can see them about Town during the Season, and can recognise them by what has been termed the tippety-tippety style of their riding, as they try to show off the points of their horses, which they are riding for West End dealers. Then you may see them in charge of a bevy of schoolgirls, trotting along hard suburban roads, or in the riding-school,

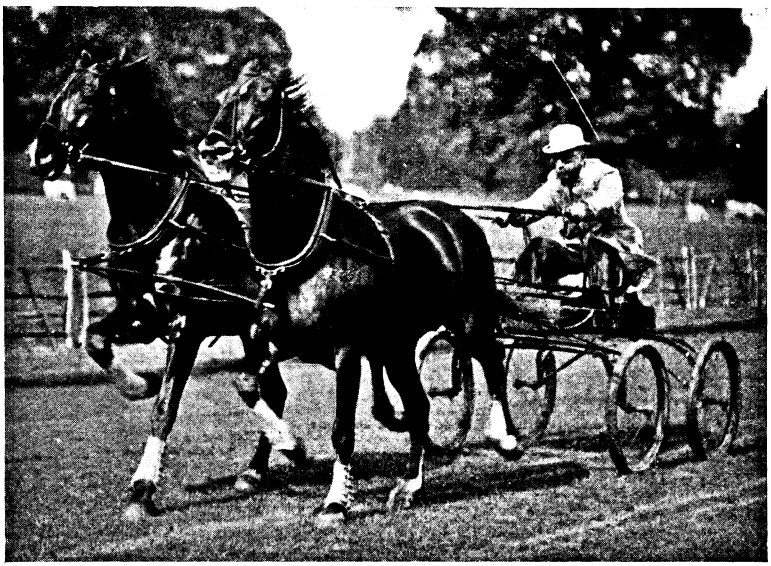


Photo by] [*The Sport and General Illustration Co.*

THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW: "BARNEY F" AND "RIP," WINNER CLASS 18 PAIRS, 4 YEARS OR OVER.

teaching schoolgirls whom it is not considered safe to trust on the road. In the winter you may see them at the meets of packs near London, but seldom after hounds have found, and settled down to their line. And you may also see them in the shops of West End habit-makers and sporting tailors, to whom they bring their pupils as customers for the necessary correct garments. Though ladies are in a minority in the profession, yet there is a considerable number of professional lady riders in London who are earning some hundreds a year. Now, I do not wish this statement to cause any country farmer's daughter or lady typewriter who can sit a horse over a sheep-hurdle to forsake the dairy or the City office for the glitter of the show-ring and the prospect of making a substantial income. The odds are against them in the first place, and in the second place the life is hard. It is true that at big shows ladies command higher fees than men, for it is universally conceded that a lady can show off a bad horse better than a man can. The eye of the purchaser is riveted on the lady, and the horse becomes a secondary consideration.



Photo by] [*The Sport and General Illustration Co.*

THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW: LORD CALTHORPE'S PAIR OF HEAVY DRAUGHT HORSES, "CHIEFTAIN" AND "GERTON HAZARD," 1ST PRIZE.

I will record an amusing proof of the truth of this statement, the circumstances of which were related to me by the lady who was the chief actor in the plot. A hunter was being shown, ridden by the son of the owner, and failed to change hands, though a member of the *jeunesse dorée*, well known in the Shires, had nibbled. The horse was "faked," and at a subsequent show—which it is unnecessary to mention—

was ridden by the daughter of the owner. The price demanded was £100 more than that asked previously. The lady got it. The bard of Avon must have been nodding when he wrote that "*Men* were deceivers ever."

But what a difference in the country! Here we are exempt from the commercial problem. Here we see the tenant farmer, the genuine supporter of fox-hunting and all sports—the man who allows us to ride over his land without telling the local solicitor to summon us for trespass. Here we see his wife and daughters, who "walk puppies" during the summer, and refresh us with wholesome ale on our return home after a hard day in the hunting season. Here we see our M.F.H., surrounded by the leading members of the hunt, with a table spread outside his drag, to which he invites all the farmers whose land his hounds cross. Corks pop, and amidst the popping we see the wives and daughters of our best friends, the tenant farmers, enjoying cold chicken and salad; for it is their annual holiday, and they say with pride that "Father is showing a good young 'un." Then we watch for the appearance of the young 'un, and our watching is not in vain. Out comes a likely four-year-old, bred by a local farmer. We all know his pedigree, for he was bred in the country. He goes through his paces, and then he is put over natural fences—fences that horses have to jump, if they are any good for riding to hounds. "Can he carry a lady?" inquires a visitor. Then springs up the owner's daughter. Inside that dust-cloak is a habit. Off goes the horse, on sticks the habit, and our friend the farmer's daughter receives the amount of a winter's dressmaker's bill.

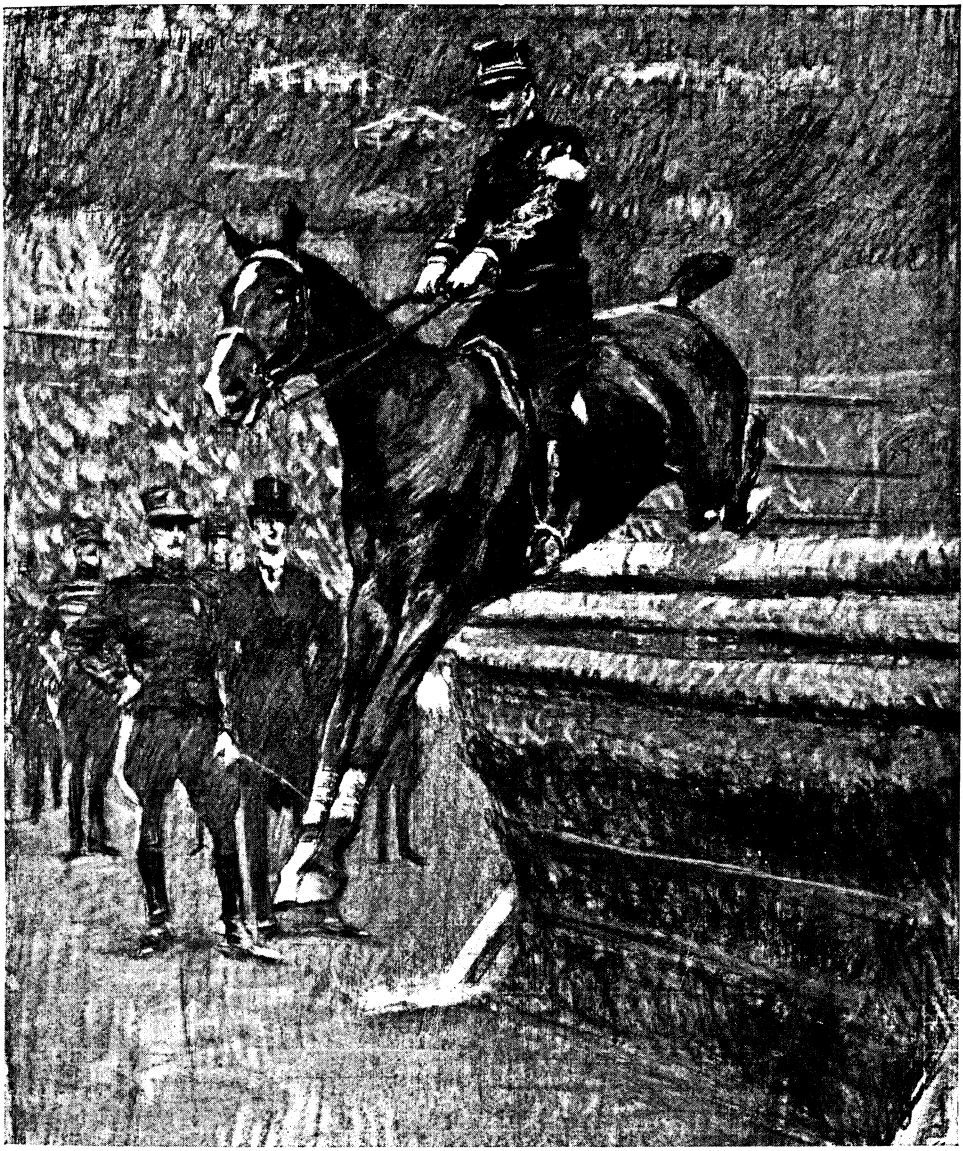
I wish that these country horse shows met with more support than they do, for I am convinced that they do more to provide unanimity between landlord and tenant than any other institutions that have ever been founded. Without this unanimity sport would cease to exist.

Now, I have great faith in what has been termed "the female element in sport." Those of us who follow hounds know that we are dependent upon ladies for walking puppies. Those of us who breed horses know that we are dependent upon ladies for looking after them in the paddocks. Briefly, we must remember that it is the female element in sport which leavens the sporting loaf. This is no exaggeration. What would



Photo by [*The Sport and General Illustration Co.*

THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW AT OLYMPIA: JUDGING THE LADY'S HACKS.



A CAVALRY JUMPER AT THE HORSE SHOW AT OLYMPIA.

This picture shows Lieutenant Baron Daufresne, whose jumping was one of the features at the Richmond Horse Show last season. From a drawing by Gilbert Holiday.

Ascot or Goodwood be without the presence of the latest productions from Paris and Bond Street? And what would our country horse shows be without the presence of the wives and daughters of the local farmers? It would be a *reductio ad absurdum*. Our social sporting gatherings would be spoilt. Fortunately in England there is a refining influence in regard to horse shows, for which ladies are mainly responsible. This is the circumstance which joins the old and new country horse shows. There was a time, within my own recollection, when a lady who attended a local show was considered to be "fast." At recent shows the greatest ladies in the land have been present in the Royal box.

The difference between a London show and a country show can be briefly summarised. The authorities of a big London show have



Photo by] [*The Sport and General Illustration Co.*

THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW: TANDEM, "TISSINGTON KITCAT" AND "COCK ROBIN," 1ST PRIZE.

to consider principally the question of finance; the authorities of a country show are free to consider mainly the question of sport. But the various standards of excellence in horse-breeding are, of course, differently affected by the two influences. Which influence is the more lastingly beneficial depends upon the point of view.

Some years ago, for instance, Yorkshire was celebrated as a Hunter-breeding county, and the fact that a Hunter had been bred in Yorkshire was a strong point in his favour, or, in other words, it increased his value in the market. Therefore it was worth the while of the Yorkshire farmers to breed Hunters and to school them. Then came the Hackney fashion, and farmers were told that it was their surest source of profit to breed Hackneys. Sir Walter Gilbey, the best judge of a Shire horse or a Hackney in England, was convinced that the Hackney was the coming horse, and with his usual munificence



Photo by] [*The Sport and General Illustration Co.*

THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW: "GRAND VULCAN," 1ST PRIZE.

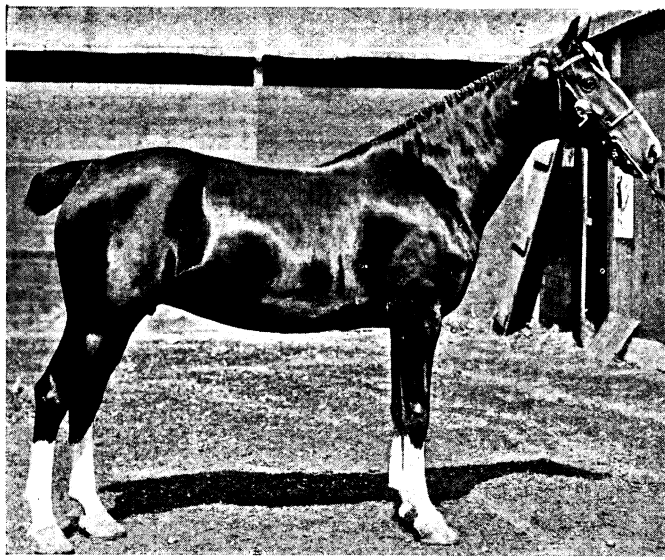


Photo by] [*The Sport and General Illustration Co.*

THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW: BROOD MARE HACKNEY "COUNTESS CLIO," 1ST CHAMPION.

encouraged farmers to breed Hackneys. He also exercised his influence at Islington to promote Hackney-breeding. The result was that the Yorkshire farmers to a large extent abandoned the breeding of Hunters for the breeding of Hackneys. But the demand for Hunters, if it has not increased, has at all events remained normal; so the Yorkshire farmers have been obliged to buy two-year-olds from Ireland and school them at home.

You may agree or may disagree with me; but I still maintain that horse-breeding depends upon the English farmers.

"HORSEMAN."



Photo by] [*The Sport and General Illustration Co.*

THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW: LADY'S HACK "LOUIS," 1ST PRIZE.



Photo by] [*The Sport and General Illustration Co.*

THE INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW: LADY'S HACK "POM POM," 2ND PRIZE.



"SPRING'S DELIGHTS." BY REX VICAT COLE.

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THE BOX OF TRICKS.

By OWEN OLIVER.

IT is not easy to me to get angry, and my brother's wife is not easy to be angry with. She looks like a grown-up baby, and she is so innocent and surprised when I point out her misdeeds, that I generally end by fancying myself the offending party. Bob chuckles on these occasions. He calls her "the box of tricks."

There are limits, however, to my amiability, and possibly—I don't feel sure!—to my sister-in-law's artfulness. When I found that she had inveigled me into a cruise in their yacht under entirely false pretences, I resolved that all her wiles should not save her from my severe displeasure when I could catch her alone.

She eluded me, by attaching herself to her other guests, until we had passed the lighthouse. Then the yacht became very lively, and the other guests disappeared in rapid succession, except a tall, good-looking young lady in *pince-nez*. She seized Mrs. Bob by the arm and rushed her out on deck; and old Bob rubbed his hands gleefully.

"The box of tricks is going to catch it this time," he observed.

"She's going to catch it a second time," I stated, and started in pursuit, with a view to securing the next innings.

I discovered the two ladies standing in the lee of the smoking-room. They were arguing with such animation that they did not notice me.

"It's abominable!" the tall young lady protested. "Perfectly atrocious!"

My sister-in-law looked at her with simulated innocence.

"It *is* a little rough," she said, catching at the handrail, and shaking her pretty head at the great green waves that greeted us at the harbour mouth. "Oh-h-h!" She threw her hood over her head to fend off a shower of spray.

"I meant *you*," said the tall young lady, balancing herself like a sailor. "You know perfectly well that I don't mind the weather."

"I think *I* do!" my naughty sister-in-law confessed. "I"—the ship gave a lurch—"I'm sure I do." She made a dart for the hatchway and disappeared, white-faced, but smiling and unrepentant.

"Serves her right!" the tall young lady muttered; but her tone was less unfriendly than her words, and she laughed unwillingly. Then she turned and saw me.

"She will not be able to introduce us for a little while," I observed. "So perhaps you will allow me——? I have the misfortune to be her brother-in-law." I do not remember that I had ever introduced myself to a lady before, but I felt that I had a good excuse in the circumstances—and the lady.

"Oh!" she said; "but surely you are not Professor Lorimer?" I am not old for a "professor," and I look younger than my age.

"Unless I have lost my identity!" I declared. "I gather that my bad little relative has kidnapped you too?"

The young lady smiled slowly.

"I did not know that I had a companion in misfortune," she said. "But, of course, it is a consolation. I think we have been associated before, in a way. We had a long controversy in the *Academical Record*. I am Margaret Fane."

I stared at her like a boor in my surprise. She was very unlike my idea of a lady who had written a treatise on Conic Sections; and still more unlike my notion of an advocate of "Woman's Rights" and female suffrage, the subjects upon which our controversy had taken place.

"You scarcely look the character," I confessed.

"How like a man!" she cried. "A woman who is not his humble slave must be a monster, of course, and wear dowdy frocks and short hair, and square-toed shoes!" She held out a tiny foot in a ridiculous, pointed, French shoe defiantly. The yacht rolled heavily just then, and her balance suffered. Fortunately I caught her and deposited her on the seat. She watched me struggling not to laugh at her.

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"'Will you marry me, darling?'"

"That is like a man too," she applauded me. "He doesn't triumph over the fallen. I concede that, and also his physical superiority. But mentally! Now, you are twice Lucy's size, and yet you have let her kidnap you; and you daren't even shake her!"

"I'm not sure that I won't," I said, "when she's well enough to be shaken. She told me that Bob and she were going for a quiet little cruise, and asked me to come and finish my book in peace on board. The anchor was up when I put my foot on deck; and I found that she had a regular party, principally women."

"That's exactly my case," said Miss Fane. "Only it seemed to me that they were principally men! She knows that I object to men."

"And she knows that I object to women. At least, I don't exactly object to them; they are an admirable, if illogical sex. What I really object to is Lucy's intention to marry me to one of them."

"Oh-h! *Does* she?"

"She does, really!"

"Which one?" Miss Fane inquired.

"I haven't the least idea."

Miss Fane laughed merrily.

"That's exactly my case, professor. She wants to marry me to someone—an enemy presumably—if the wretch has one!"

"Upon my word, I don't believe she has," I confessed.

"No. I really don't believe she has! We'll say to a friend who needs a little harsh discipline! But she has not informed me of her selection. However, I do not apprehend any danger."

"You may be able to defend yourself," I said; "but I am not so secure. Women are attractive creatures. A man is never safe unless he runs away!"

"There!" she cried triumphantly. "And yet you claimed, in your articles, that men had more moral courage than women! Now, I am only a poor weak woman; but I am not afraid that any man will marry me against my will."

"But aren't you afraid of being willing," I inquired.

"Certainly not," she asserted. "In the present state of the laws—the man-made laws—I am very *un*willing, and likely to remain so. I shall work in my cabin, and have no more to do with them than civility requires; or, if I do, it will only be to tantalise Lucy and make her think that she is succeeding in her evil designs." Miss Fane laughed a laugh which did not strike me as that of a blue-stocking. "She will be so mad when she is undeceived, the little monkey!"

"That's a capital idea," I pronounced. "I think *I* might try it; but *you* mustn't."

"Indeed! Why not?"

"It wouldn't be quite fair to the poor man, unless he was in the joke."

"No-o; but I can't very well tell him."

"You've told me," I pointed out. "We might kill one bird with two stones, don't you think? Besides, there are a lot of things that I should like to discuss with you."

She looked at me without the *pince-nez*. They were drenched with spray, and she had taken them off and was wiping them. She looked still more charming without them.

"We shall quarrel violently, of course," she stated, "but—if you really mean it—we understand each other, of course——"

"Of course," I agreed. "Decidedly."

"And she really does deserve to be taken in."

"Exactly," I said. "Precisely."

"It will annoy her so much because—— Yes, I really think we might, because she is so silly. I simply *can't* make her understand how utterly impossible it is for me to contemplate mar—such an absurd thing—in the present state of affairs. She thinks that a woman is only made to be married. It is absurd!"

"Preposterous!" I agreed. "She thinks just the same about men. I've often tried to make her understand the position; but it's no use."

"*And*," said Miss Fane impressively, "I believe—I positively believe—she's always extolling you to the skies. I'm almost sure that *we are the snares which she has laid for each other*."

Miss Fane laughed ironically.

"Ah!" I said. "Umph! I shouldn't wonder! I took Lucy fishing once, I remember. She'd never make a fisherman. She's too loquacious; and she puts all 'the poor fish' back in the water! Still, I observed that she selected her bait with excellent judgment!"

"You flatter yourself!" Miss Fane exclaimed.

"I assure you that I only alluded to *you*," I declared.

"That's just like a man!" she cried. "They will swallow any amount of flattery themselves, and they never realise that women see through it in a moment. So you need not trouble to compliment me, except before Lucy, just as part of the play, you know—— I am afraid she is rather ill. I think I'll go

and heap coals of fire on her deceitful little head."

"Oh, Bob will look after her. You'd better stay and heap them on mine. About this question of moral courage, now?"

We argued about moral courage, the civic disabilities of women, the relative value of masculine reason and feminine instinct, why no lady ever buys a comic paper, and how Ellen Thornycroft Fowler came by man's prerogative of humour. We had passed on to the subject of hatpins when the dinner-gong sounded. She had ten in her hat, and maintained that they were not for ornament, but for use; or that, if they *were* for ornament, men ought to be grateful to women for looking nice. "Frumps will never get women their rights," she added emphatically.

"And if they would," I told her, "you wouldn't buy them so dear! And you couldn't!"

We had the saloon to ourselves for dinner. Everyone else was prostrated, except Bob; and he was "having a peck with Lucy," as he described it. They are preposterously attached to each other.

"A man's moral courage," I observed.

"The courage is Lucy's," my companion contradicted. "She dares to let him see her when she is green."

"She *has* plenty of moral courage," I confessed. "She vows that she proposed to Bob, because he stood off on account of her money." Lucy was a great heiress, and the big yacht was hers, in fact. "I believe it's true to the extent that she surprised him into proposing to her. But her moral courage does not qualify her for a vote. She knows twice as much about politics as Bob does——"

"Twice nothing!" Miss Fane suggested.

"Exactly. But if you gave her a dozen votes, she'd vote for anyone he told her to."

"And he'd tell her to vote just how he knew she wanted to! Besides, they're not a fair case to argue from. They are absolutely suited to each other, and really in love."

"You believe in love, then?" I inquired. I could not quite reconcile this with her articles.

"Yes," she said briefly. "I never quarrel with facts."

"That isn't quite the point," I protested. "That the world is blessed—or otherwised—with a fact called 'love,' we all know. The question is its reality and value. In their case you called it 'real,' and I gathered that you put some considerable value on it."

Miss Fane paused in her attack on a pink ice.

"I am putting a weapon in your hands," she said, "but—yes. In their case, I do. Their case is very exceptional. They are like people with a sixth sense or a dual personality. I believe that such freaks of Nature exist; but I refuse to base a theory of life upon such abnormal instances. If every married couple were a 'Bob-and-Lucy,' I shouldn't worry about Woman's Rights. Her Bob would see that she got them; and it wouldn't matter much if she didn't. So I should just look out for my 'Bob'! And *you* wouldn't 'object to women.'"

"You have convinced me already that there is an exception to my rule," I stated.

"You were bound to say that. So it doesn't count." She renewed her onslaught on the ice.

"Yes," I agreed. "I was. *I* never quarrel with facts. And the exception *does* count; more than the rule sometimes!"

We spent the next day making exceptions to our rules about the opposite sex. The Channel was in a merry mood, and made a plaything of the two-thousand-ton yacht. Even the great liners were pitching like little boats, and white foam was jumping over their bows in torrents. No one else showed up on deck except Bob. He spent part of his time on the bridge—he was chief officer on a liner when he met Lucy, and he loves to do a little navigation—and the rest of it in his sick wife's cabin.

"There's nothing much the matter with 'the box of tricks,'" he assured us. "She's afraid to face you two, that's all. I propped her up with pillows for half an hour and played piquet with her, and she cheated me out of half a sovereign!"

"She's frightfully bad really," Miss Fane told me, after she had paid her a visit. "She only manages to put on a bright face to him because she won't spoil his pleasure. A *man* couldn't do that."

"I believe *you* are feeling very bad really," I said chaffingly, "but your woman's moral courage won't let you desert me and spoil my pleasure."

"Well," she confessed unexpectedly, "I'm not ill; but I feel just a little doubtful, since I went below."

"And I'm walking you about!" I cried remorsefully. "You poor thing!"

I went for cushions and rugs, and tucked her up in a long deck-chair, and sat beside her.

"Now," I said, "if you're well enough to talk, own that a man has his uses."

"I'm quite well enough to talk. I feel

very comfortable and cheerful now. Thank you!" She smiled very pleasantly. "Yes. A man has his uses. That's the worst of it. A man is a man, and a woman is a woman."

"My dear Miss Fane," I said, "you have put the whole truth in a nutshell."

"No, no! It is true; but it is only part of a truth—nowadays. I don't suppose it was ever all the truth; not even in prehistoric savagery. I suspect there were always women like Lucy!"

"Eve," I instanced.

"She *is* Eve-ish, isn't she?" We both laughed. "Still, in early times it was perhaps seven-eighths of the truth, and in the classic days three-quarters—later Rome excepted. In the Middle Ages it was more than half the truth. If a woman had power, it was not by rights, but by her Eveishness."

"The way appointed by Nature," I asserted.

"But you forget. Nature doesn't stand still. Men and women are different from what they were."

"I doubt it," I demurred.

"Well, their relations are different, anyhow. There is less 'domesticity' and more 'business'; less 'love' and more 'friendship'; but friendship is unripe yet. Marriage is only one of many careers for a woman now. The relations of men and women have altered, altered more than the world recognises. That is what 'Woman's Rights' mean; not a change, but the recognition of a change; of the equality of women with men. Dependence is no longer possible to a woman who has been independent, who has earned her living, as I do. The relation should be equal—well, approximately equal."

"Ah!" I cried. "Never mind the fractions. The question is *what* relation? You can't make the main tie of human life a mere matter of business. It isn't so even between man and man or woman and woman. What is the relation to be?"

"Well—it ought to be friendship, if——" She paused.

"*If*," I said. "Isn't that the point?"

"If they would forget the 'man and woman' nonsense."

"If they *could*," I corrected. "And they can't. Miss Fane, you are a very clever young lady; the only woman's-rightist I have ever met who had common-sense; or who remained absolutely womanly. *Is* platonic friendship possible?"

She crossed her hand over the rug on her knees and looked at me.

"It is possible, I think," she stated; "but—you never know."

"Then," I said, "you and I are sailing in uncharted seas."

"I think——" She looked thoughtfully at the waters. "It is getting calmer, I think. Shall we walk?"

"No," I said. "We'll take our bearings in these dangerous waters where we are sailing."

She was silent for a little while.

"We are sailing *towards* uncharted seas," she said at last. "And I want you to understand why I cannot sail there. I particularly wish you to know—to know perfectly clearly—that it is not because I undervalue the prospect of your friendship. It would be pleasant to me to be friends with you, but I—I have vowed never to take the risk of such a friendship, slight though it may be."

"I do not undervalue the risk," I said; "but I could not overvalue your friendship."

She looked at the sea again.

"The argument has taken a rather personal turn," she remarked; "but I don't quarrel with facts, as I told you. It *is* a personal question between us; and you have a right to know my mind. I knew a man and a woman who tried it once; knew them well." She caught my eyes. "No. I was not the woman. She was a fellow-student. She wasn't so good at scribbling about Woman's Rights as I; but she believed in them more. I don't mean that I am not an honest believer; but I am less of a recluse; more a woman of the world; more inclined—too much inclined—to see both sides of a question. I try to be practical and tolerant. I will give you an example. *She* would regard Lucy as a slave, because she hasn't a vote. *I* recognise that Lucy has her rights. You see that I am a sensible suffragist, professor."

"My dear Miss Fane," I said, "if I told you all that I see in you——! You are most sensible and most practical; and I don't believe there is any real difference between us."

She laughed suddenly.

"And so, of course, I am sensible! That's a man all over! Well, she wasn't very sensible, and she was utterly unpractical. The Rights of Woman were a sort of religion to her. Platonic friendship was an item of the creed. With him it was only a means to an end. When she found out that she was the end, she dropped the friendship. He went to the bad. People said that it was her fault."

She clasped and unclasped her hands. "It was."

"You think that she ought to have married him! To have sacrificed her—*your* principles?"

"I think the sacrifice was called for. She didn't care for anyone else; and she had been his intimate friend. She had sailed with him on 'the uncharted seas' for five years, taken the risk of those who sail there. And she was fond of him in her cold way, she owned it to me; but there was a clear understanding, she said, and marriage was contrary to her principles. Oh! What's the good of 'understandings' and 'principles' when you ruin a man's life! Your dearest friend! I couldn't have done it. I *couldn't* have done it—liking him as she did. You are very generous, professor; and very straight—I like that man's word. However remote, however unlikely, friendship means the risk of spoiling a man's life. *Can* I take it?"

"You cannot take it," I pronounced, "*unless* you are prepared to insure him against the risk; and *unless* he is prepared to insure you."

"But *I* don't want to be insured."

"Then you meet the case by insuring him. Let's be concrete and practical. You can meet the risk of *our* friendship by insuring *me*."

"Or by not embarking upon it," she observed—not, I thought, with emphasis.

"You have told me that you never quarrel with facts," I reminded her. "Have we not in fact embarked, and set sail as friends?"

"A—a little way," she confessed, with a delightful flush.

"Very well," I said. "We will drop metaphor. You are my friend. Do you wish to discontinue the friendship?" She shook her head. "But you don't like the risk to me—there isn't any to you, of course?" I waited for an answer, but I did not obtain one. "Will you spare me the risk? Insure me?"

"I don't see——" she began.

"Oh, yes, you do! The insurance is that in a contingency which you regard as very unlikely, you would not 'ruin my life'; that, if you liked me well as a friend, and did not like anyone else as anything more, and I asked you to marry me, you would say 'Yes.' I understood that you would feel bound to do so."

"Rather than ruin anyone's life. That was what I meant."

"I should not ask you unless it meant everything to me. Is it a bargain?"

"I—I suppose it must be—if we are to be friends."

"And we are."

She adjusted her rugs and struggled with a pillow. I lifted her head and put the pillow right."

"Are we?" I insisted, as I laid her back.

"You know we are," she said. Her voice trembled and her eyes blinked. I drew her to me.

"Will you marry me, darling?" I begged. "Not because you promised, but because I love you and you love me. You know you do."

"Yes," she said, with a choke. "I know I do!"

We were sitting hand in hand watching the sea grow smooth, and the red sun drop below the horizon, when a white little face peeped between our shoulders, and my sister-in-law's coaxing voice whispered in our ears.

"God bless you and make you very, very happy!" she said. "I wonder if you know how *much* I wish it, dears?"

"I wonder if you know what a good woman you are, Lucy!" I said.

"Come and sit beside us," Margaret told her. "We couldn't bear anybody else; but we shall *love* to have *you* with us, dear."

Old Bob grinned when he saw us.

"So you've scored again," he remarked, "you box of conjuring tricks!"

"Shall I tell you how it's done?" she asked, putting her arm through his. "It's just—just being fond of people."

Which is the trick of life!

AGAINST OBLIVION.

CITIES drowned in olden time
Keep, they say, a magic chime
Rolling up from far below
When the moon-led waters flow.

So within me, ocean-deep,
Lies a sunken world asleep.
Lest its bells forget to ring,
Memory! set the tide a-swing!

HENRY NEWBOLT.

WHITE WALLS.

By MAX PEMBERTON.

CHAPTER I.

AT THE CONVENT GATE.

MOTHER BARBARA kissed Ulusia upon both cheeks, and although in this she was not imitated by the Bishop, that worthy man smiled benign approval as he followed his niece to the convent gate.

Beyond, in the streets of Vienna, winter reigned; not in the caparison of melancholy, but as a king of intimate delights.

It was the fourth day of January, and there had been unbroken frost since the beginning of the month of December. The streets were white and hard as iron. Icicles depended from the gargoyles of the convent church; they ornamented even the scrubby beard of the ancient porter who ushered the Bishop to his carriage. Ulusia went out to a narrow thoroughfare where the sleigh bells tinkled merrily, and pedestrians trotted to keep themselves warm. Here everything spoke of the domination of winter and its picturesqueness.

"Good-bye, dear Mother," she said, turning for an instant to kiss her hand to the little old lady in the Benedictine robe; "good-bye, dear Mother, I shall soon come back."

"Or we shall persuade Holy Mother to come to Rabka," said the Bishop, picking up his skirts lest the melted snow at the convent gates should soil them. So much anxiety did this manœuvre cost him that he had forgotten all about Count Rudolph, whose nose was very red and hands were exceedingly blue with long waiting in the cold.

"My dear Ulusia, what am I thinking of?—here is Count Rudolph."

Ulusia was just going to say: "Oh, is he?" but she checked herself in time and gave the Count a pleasant nod. Then they all entered the carriage and were driven away rapidly to the station. Ulusia, radiantly young and properly happy, did not bless her uncle for that.

"Oh," she said, "if it were to Vienna we were going!"

"But, my child, are you not going to Rabka, to your inheritance?"

She shook her head, looking ardently upon the splendid shops, the busy people, the trotting sleighs. Had she not spent the last fifteen years of her life in a convent—and she was but twenty-one?

"Dear uncle," she protested, "if you would but forget my inheritance a little while!"

"Her Excellency prefers the bread to the salt," chimed in Count Rudolph, who had been ignored until this time. Ulusia heard him disdainfully. She forgot to remember that the Bishop had once called him handsome.

"Certainly I do," she exclaimed impatiently; and then: "Oh, think of it, Count, sixteen years in a convent, and then driven pell-mell from Vienna! Is that my inheritance?"

His Saintliness smiled very sweetly.

"There is no compulsion, my child. From to-day you are your own mistress. Say the word, and we will prepare a house in Vienna for you immediately."

She clapped her hands.

"Immediately . . . then, I have said it, uncle. Now stop the sleigh."

"No need to do that," said Count Rudolph. . . . "Here we are and here is the station."

Servants, awaiting them, now appeared from the narthex of the great terminus, and having saluted the good old Bishop, would have helped his niece to alight; but Ulusia leaped to the pavement despite her heavy sables; and turning one reluctant glance upon the city she was leaving, she consented to the journey.

Women are easily led when the cord is of gossamer. Ulusia was no exception—she was at liberty to return to Vienna; therefore she did not.

"Well," she said, "it will only be one dreadful week more. Does the train start at once, uncle?"

"At ten minutes past ten," rejoined the Bishop; and having dropped his umbrella, he allowed his purse also to fall as a witness to his indifference.

They took their seats in a reserved first-

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class carriage and were soon on the way. Ulusia sat in the corner upon the right-hand side; the Bishop had his back to the engine, which he named facetiously "the Enemy"; Count Rudolph seated himself next to Ulusia and began to regard her with close attention. Ten years ago he made up his mind to marry her when she was twenty-one—but he had not seen her ten times in as many years.

Scrutiny pleased him. She was astonishingly fair, almost a Circassian in the milk-like softness of her skin and the abundance of prisoned hair, which a woman would have called "tow-coloured"—a man "golden." Her eyes he thought arbitrary and indicative of temper. After all, that was nothing, for he liked a woman with a temper. Her figure, just a little masculine, but well developed and round in its prominent contours, pleased him. He reflected, none the less, that all this did not matter. Was she not the richest woman in Austria that day?

Ulusia caught him looking at her and had still sufficient of the schoolgirl to be tempted to respond with a grimace. She forbore with difficulty and began to question him in a way that was astonishing.

"Why did you come with my uncle?" she asked. He stroked his beard before replying.

"To pay my respects to the Mistress of Rabka."

"You've never paid them before . . . and I can't send you away for two years. Why did you come?"

The Count laughed as a man who has heard a very good joke. His face flushed crimson nevertheless.

"Mother Barbara is not a friend to soldiers."

"Did she refuse you permission to see me?"

"I am not saying that——"

"Then do not say anything at all. How far is it from Vienna to my house?"

"It is just two hundred and seventy-six miles, Countess."

He had not called her Countess before, and as she had been simply "Ulusia" to everyone in the Convent, the title amused her. They laughed together; but as though resenting his familiarity, she became serious instantly.

"And my salt-mines . . . how far are they from the Castle?"

He did not like the possessive expression; it jarred upon his sense of authority; but he answered with what nonchalance he could—

"They are everywhere, at your door, beneath your kitchens, under the very walls which Count Stephen built five hundred years ago. You can pass straight from the hall of your house to the workings. That's a door I don't suppose you will often use!"

She lifted her head and showed him antagonistic eyes.

"Why should I not use it? Am I forbidden?"

"Oh, by no means . . . but, well, the mines of Rabka are not as pretty as Vienna."

She was silent a little while, watching the frozen Danube by which the train carried them. They had come to the low mountains which girdle the great Viennese plain, and were following the river valley with these whitened domes as their sentinels. All the countryside sparkled in the bright sunshine. They could see sleighs upon the high-road, and their occupants, clad in heavy furs, looked like so many bears from the hills tucked away beneath hairy rugs and vastly amused by their adventure.

"You think I am very much out of place at Rabka?" said Ulusia presently. He did not deny it.

"I think you should see the mine and then forget that it is yours. It needs a man's hand, Countess. We have to be very firm. These 'labour movements' burrow under ground—even I have my difficulties."

She nodded her head.

"They say that you are very cruel to the men."

He lifted his eyebrows—glancing towards the figure of the Bishop in the corner. A premature alarm—the good man already slumbered peacefully.

"Who are my detractors?"

"Every man who knows Rabka. They say that dreadful things are done in the mine. I am going to see for myself."

"I will conduct you everywhere. Your own eyes shall acquit me. What I have done has been in your interests—there would have been no mine at Rabka if it had been otherwise."

Ulusia laughed.

"I knew that you would say that," she said a little scornfully—and then: "Are you not hungry, Count Rudolph? I am. I perish with hunger . . . and look at my uncle. How can he sleep at this time of day? Isn't it disgraceful?"

His Saintliness awoke at this moment to ask: "What was disgraceful?" and obtaining no satisfactory reply, consented to stoop to the mere earthly necessities of bread and



"'Why did you come with my uncle?'"

meat—to say nothing of the excellent golden wine which the Count commanded. They breakfasted while the train rolled on amid ice-bound mountains, across the frozen face of giant rivers; and when they had breakfasted, even Ulusia imitated the Bishop, her uncle, and deigned to sleep. It was half-past three when she awoke to perceive Count Rudolph watching her closely, and to realise that they had entered upon a wilder country, stern, desolate and even forbidding.

"Well," she exclaimed, "and are we there?"

"You are just thirty miles from 'there.'"

"Oh," she exclaimed, "what a dreadful journey! I shall never come back when I escape."

The Count sighed upon a sense of real relief.

"You will be very wise not to do so."

"Wise to run away from my own property?"

"Wise to enjoy the fruits of it."

"I am very rich, Count Rudolph."

He smiled.

"You will never know how rich you are."

"Then I shall take a house in Vienna and enjoy myself——"

"It would have to be a fine house——"

"Oh, of course, and I shall fill it with all my old friends from the convent—and be 'not at home' to my uncle," she added with a mischievous glance towards him. The Count approved the idea.

"But you will be 'at home' to me," he said, with all the unction he could command.

"I shall be at home to you if they speak well of you at the mines——"

"If they speak well! Who may 'they' be?"

"The workmen . . . the people you have ruled in my name."

"Oh, they will give me a poor character, no doubt."

"Then you will deserve it."

Her candour astonished him. Secretly he resolved that the taming of this little "tiger-cat" should be one of his ambitions; but he made a commonplace answer, and thereafter spoke of commonplace things. Meanwhile, the railway debouched suddenly upon a drear plain from one side of which the mountains appeared to have vanished altogether. A number of high chimneys, ugly and monstrous, took shape upon a distant horizon. Darkness fell quickly and soon it was night.

Count Rudolph touched his Saintliness upon the shoulder and helped Ulusia to put on her furs.

"This is Rabka," he said, "this is your home."

CHAPTER II.

A MEMORABLE DAY.

ULUSIA dreamed of many things that night; being chiefly of a carriage drawn by four brown horses, and a great mob of dark-visaged people, who lifted torches as she passed and cried the name of her dead uncle, Philip the Wise.

This was quite a triumphant entry to Rabka. They passed beneath many arches of lanterns from a primitive railway station to the foot of the mountains. Thence upwards upon a zigzag to the ramparts of the Castle.

Ulusia had been as delighted as a child with all his fiery panoply of welcome. She liked to see the rockets cleaving the black darkness, to hear the people's shout of welcome, and to realise that she, who yesterday was a schoolgirl, had become to-day the mistress of this half-seen community. When the guns thundered upon the hillside, she shrank from their report, but would not have stilled it. Had not Count Rudolph said that Rabka was no place for a woman?

They had crossed a drawbridge at length and passed into a gloomy stone courtyard, beyond which lay the great doors of the Castle. Footmen in liveries of gold and blue stood here, and an ancient Major Domo with a profound contempt for all women. When he had bowed very stiffly to Ulusia, he gave place to a little old lady in black, the Baroness Elwitza—the chaperon whom the Bishop had chosen to satisfy the world, if not his niece. Ulusia nodded to her and went upstairs to dress for a formal dinner in an old stone dining-room, of which the only pleasant ornament was a vast fire of logs roaring up an ancient chimney.

Count Rudolph did not appear at the dinner-table, pleading arrears of work. As for his Saintliness, fatigue had him in her grip; and it was left for the little nut-faced Baroness to speak enthusiastically of Rabka and its wonders. When she found that no one listened to her, she also lapsed into that melancholy silence which desires bed and is not to be denied.

They were all fast asleep by ten o'clock, and Ulusia was dreaming of the carriage with four horses and the laughing postilions. She seemed still to hear the booming of the guns and the ringing of bells: nor was this wholly a delusion, for the Castle clock waked her at six o'clock precisely, and immediately afterwards she heard the call of the Angelus.

What a change was this from yesternight! What a scene of rugged grandeur upon the one hand and of human activity upon the other! High above the Castle heights stood the whitened crags of the mountains, dominating height and valley, torrent and cascade. Northward, however, it was impossible to count the trucks laden with the fresh ground salt, or all the busy men who despatched them upon their journeys to Vienna and the West. Here lay the mine of Rabka . . . here far below the earth men delved night and day that Ulusia might be the richest in Austria.

She was but a child this morning, wearing her convent dress of dark blue cloth with lace at the wrists of it, and hardly looking twice in the glass before she ran downstairs

to burst out upon the terrace and enjoy the freshness of the morning air. Passing from this to other terraces, down step by step, to the great plain, spread out as a snow sea before the Castle walls, at length she met Count Rudolph and heard, but would not hear, the curse with which he had greeted sub-inspector Kessling, who had just told him a truth he did not wish to learn. The Count turned as red as a turkey-cock to be thus overheard, but he was at no pains to excuse himself—

"I am shutting the *cafés* below at six o'clock to-day," he said; "there is too much drunkenness on these occasions—I mean to stop it."

Ulusia did not understand him at all.

"*Cafés*—are there *cafés* below the ground?"

"My dear young lady . . . there are scores of them."

"And the people?"

"Some of them never see the sun."

"Oh," she cried, "what a life to live! Can we not alter that, Count Rudolph?"

He laughed with just a *soupçon* of irony.

"Interfere with them and they will murder you. I know them. A philanthropist's life would not be worth twenty hours' purchase at Rabka. Whatever you do . . . in two years' time, Countess, avoid philanthropy. They are too well off already."

She would not argue with him.

"I will ask them if that is true," she said quietly; and then: "Of course you know best, Count—you have been so long among them."

"As your servant, Countess . . . that and nothing more. All that I do is in your name. It will be done with greater zeal now that I know you."

Here was Count Rudolph's first attempt to modulate his voice and sentiment to the *rôle* upon which he had been so long intent. This mere child, he thought, could hardly escape him. Would not he be her companion day by day at Rabka? and while he talked so glibly about her return to Vienna, was not that the very last journey he desired? Unfortunately, he might as well have addressed the wall of the Castle as Ulusia von Erlach, its mistress. She paid not the slightest attention to him, but gathering her skirts and showing him the shapeliest ankle in Rabka that day, she prepared to return to breakfast.

"At what time does the service begin, Count Rudolph?"

"At ten o'clock—in the cathedral, Countess."

The cathedral! Oh, surely these were fables! A cathedral below the ground! People who never saw the sun! This was her heritage. She, Ulusia, the schoolgirl, was the mistress of the wonders. Oh, she must hasten to see them!

Bishop Heinrich von Erlach, for that was her uncle's name, had not appeared when Ulusia re-entered the Castle, and she imagined that she would not see him until after the service. Baroness Elwitza—who had been baptised Louise—took coffee with her charge—for as such she would consider Ulusia—and spoke of the necessity of an imposing *entrée*.

"You have been a name to these people since your dear father died," she said, "do not disappoint them to-day. I think it very necessary that you should be well-dressed, my child. I would prefer to see you magnificent, if I may use the word."

"Use any word you please, madam," said Ulusia curtly, "I am going as I am."

"But, dear girl, your convent dress——"

Ulusia laughed.

"I know enough about the mines for that, Baroness—they dress you in canvas and you wear nails in your boots. Why talk of magnificence? Shall I write it upon my back: 'She is dressed in a coat of leather, but she is magnificent'? No, no, I will go to the people as I am—to my people, Baroness. If they will not love me so, they shall not love me at all."

The Baroness was much perturbed to hear that her beautiful gown from *Leblanc et ses fils* of 11, Peters-Platz, Vienna, was forbidden to make an impression upon the miners of Rabka, to say nothing of their wives; but she spoke no more of a "magnificent" appearance, and when the time came for them to go down to the cathedral, she appeared in a simple black dress with a beaded bonnet, and expressed anxiety for the salvation even of those.

This was far from a dramatic entry, for the religious rite forbade any such thing, and the honours of vesture were momentarily with the Bishop. None the less it was a memorable day, and Ulusia never forgot it to her life's end.

CHAPTER III.

THE MAN.

COUNT RUDOLPH himself came to conduct Ulusia to the mines, and with him were three of the chiefs of the Rabka police, not

unpicturesquely dressed in a neat uniform of brown waterproof cloth, with heavy brass helmets for their chief ornament. These saluted in the military fashion, while a little company of serving-men presently joined them and notified that all was ready.

This company gathered in the great stone hall of the Castle and waited there a little while for my Lord Bishop, who appeared presently in his violet robes, but not yet habited for the office. To the Baroness's whispered question concerning the canvas overalls and the hobnailed boots, he answered that they were not necessary for the cathedral, which lay on the upper of the five storeys, and was but a few hundred feet below the ground. This put the little old lady to much chagrin, and she was still lamenting her beaded bonnet when the Major Domo with a majestic bow opened the great doors upon the left-hand side of the hall and they began their descent.

Let us follow them observantly to this wonderful world below the earth.

For the moment, it is true, they were confronted by nothing more remarkable than a wide marble staircase, lit everywhere by electric lamps and guarded by Rabka police as though it were a fortress. Anon, however, the giant lift was reached, and here, in a cage gorgeous in silk and velvets, the simple journey began. Living and breathing at one moment in a known and familiar kingdom, the next appeared to carry them to the domains of fairyland, to the place of fables, and the heart of mysteries.

As in a flash from the glory of the day to the regions of eternal night—from the realities of the sunshine to the magic of dreamland — whirled down from a bleak country to a city and a people that hardly knew the sun. Such was the transit which Ulusia made. Such was her introduction to the mines of Rabka.

She had been unprepared—how could it be otherwise? They had told her what Rabka was like, had tried to fire her imagina- by pictures of its wonderland—but what child could conceive the magnitude of these things or all their bewildering novelty?

Now Ulusia stepped from the Castle lift into the Imperial Avenue of the Rabka mine, and what she saw was a vast boulevard of pure rock-salt; a boulevard roofed by salt, with salt for its pavements, salt for its roadway, salt for the very walls of the gorgeous houses and shops which bordered its avenues. Carrying the scheme to its logical conclusion, there were even *kiosks* of the eternal rock and spreading fountains whose basins a sculptor's hand had curved.

Illumined by thousands of giant arc-lamps, the splendour of this scene was beyond anything that Ulusia had conceived possible, beyond all the dreams of a pictured and a fabled land. So she stood a little while entranced, listening to the cheers from a thousand throats, and wholly unconscious that she was the object of them.

How the people welcomed her! True, there was a more turbulent element at the back which cried its welcome a little savagely, but this had no taste to try the temper of the horsemen's sabres; while those in the front rank, amazed that such a mere child and one so beautiful should be the Lady Ulusia, could not shout loud enough to establish their satisfaction. And down their ranks, the famous police of Rabka mounted and with drawn swords protecting her, Ulusia passed in Bishop Heinrich's company to the cathedral gates and the Mass of Thanksgiving.

Consider this splendid fane—a Byzantine cathedral cut sheer from the rock, its roof lying beneath the ground; altar, stalls, pulpit, all shining with a silvery lustre or the hues of jaspar and of porphyry beneath the magic of the lamps. Here lay a building wherein ten thousand might stand and nigh four thousand might sit. Here the miners of Rabka came, their wives, their sisters, their children, to give thanks, as the Bishop hoped —but, in truth, to see the Lady Ulusia who would bestow freedom upon them.

It was a stately pageant, helped not a little by the singers from Vienna and an orchestra of clever instrumentalists trained in the shadow of the mines. As for the curious throngs which knelt in the nave, all nations of the Near East appeared to be represented there. And all wore their native dress today, so that Ulusia, looking down from her high seat near the pulpit, was dazzled by a swaying sea of colour which shimmered in the warm glow of lamps as a field of corn in the glamour of the moonlight. In turn these thousand faces were watching her, keenly and with close scrutiny. Would she help them? Would she be their friend? Ah, how much her friendship might mean!

Ulusia, however, remained quite unconscious of all this. If the plain truth is to be told, she cared little at such a time for mere religious display, little for the solemn music, the muted harmonies, the strident voice of Bishop Heinrich as he stood at the altar and prayed for the people who supplied

him with so many comforts. Indeed, she was thankful when the service was over and they went to the "public breakfast" in the Hall of Crystals, as the banqueting-hall is named at Rabka.

Here strutting worthies in wonderful uniforms pledged each other in brief toasts and declared mutually that they were the finest fellows in the world. The Bishop made a speech which no one quite understood and drank champagne in episcopal moderation. It remained for Count Rudolph to propose Ulusia's health—which he did with redundant compliment and a subtle flattery which was irresistible. Then he drained a glass to her, and every man sprang to his chair, and lifting glasses, or breaking them, as the national custom went, cried for long minutes together "Hoch, hoch, hoch!"

Ulusia had never made a speech in all her life, and she had a very poor notion of what she ought to say to this company. Her words were very simple and natural. She wished the people's happiness, but felt herself quite unable to promote it. For that she relied upon her good friend Count Rudolph—an expression which provoked others, who were acquainted with the Count's brutalities, to smiles. Her reference to her own childhood was amusing. "If I do wrong, you must blame my uncle," she said naïvely, "for he has been responsible for my education." And then she added quite naturally: "but I expect you all to teach me to do right."

They cheered this and liked the tone of it. The younger men declared her to be very pretty—but with "a devil of a will of her own." Older heads surmised that Rudolph would quickly tame her, and promised themselves some excitement from such a contention of wills during the months to come. This promise, indeed, was the chief subject of talk while the banquet endured; and when it was done, many of the officers declared their intention of following "Her Excellency" to the depths and hearing her opinion of them. Were there not black secrets down there, and would this little schoolgirl dream of them?

They put on their overalls in the great room known as the "Stranger's Hall" and began without any further delay the tour of the mines of Rabka proper. It is true that there were arcades and streets on the floors immediately below the great cathedral, but these were not so fine as the Imperial arcade; and lower down still, a gigantic lift dropping them swiftly in an iron cage, they came to actual workings, where the rock salt was cut from the solid walls and sent up the tremendous shafts to the grinding-mills above.

Here for the first time a true sense of this subterranean world impressed the beholder and could but inspire him to awe. Acheron itself flowed through these depths, a black river in a bed of jade—for such it seemed to be. And upon both sides of it were the wide tunnels through which horses, that knew no other world, dragged their burdens towards the day.

It should be admitted that Ulusia carried but vague impressions of this wonder-world; nor could it have been otherwise upon a first visit to Rabka. Was not this a country of its own? And how different from the fabled lands of her imagination. These *cafés*, wherein the leather-coated workmen had begun already to keep carnival, how different from those she had seen in the Prater at Vienna upon the rare days of an excursion abroad! These tunnelled streets, what journeys they suggested, into the very bowels of the earth, to the nameless darkness and the abode of spirits! And the people, red-eyed and pale and slinking, as though a ray from the world above may fall upon them by accident and strike them with blindness! Ulusia shrank from these people, for Rabka had put its spell upon her, and she began almost to fear that she would never see the living world again.

Count Rudolph, be it observed, did not remain unconscious of this impression, nor was he dissatisfied with it. Whatever the enthusiasm at Rabka, he wanted no woman in the mines. Let Ulusia play with a girl's toys in the house and park above—that was her sphere: but the labyrinth, its governance, its secrets, surely they were his!

Persuasively he pointed out the dangers of the way—the inconvenience of it; he spoke of "irreconcilables" who roamed the lower workings as criminals the alleys of a great city. He told of dark crimes committed there; of dreadful women of whom the very police were afraid; of riot and even murder. To all of which Ulusia replied in a tone which he found difficult to interpret. Perhaps her shrewd wit already perceived his drift.

"Afraid!" she exclaimed, "all these fine fellows with the big sabres; did you say they were afraid of the women?"

"In a sense, yes. A clever man is always afraid of an angry woman."

"Then I must not be angry—or you would be afraid of me. Where are these dreadful people?"

"Some are in the black gallery—many live by the lake-side."

"The lake—is there a lake at Rabka?"

"The most wonderful lake in the world."

"Then why do you not take me to see it?"

"I waited for his Excellency——"

"My uncle—oh, I never wait for him. Please take me to the lake at once—if you are not afraid."

He made no further objection, but summoning a young officer to his side, he whispered a command and immediately led the way down a wide tunnel of the rock to a narrow, winding staircase which police guarded with drawn sabres in their hands. Down this they passed, treading a laborious way to a wider gallery below, and thence through a series of giant caves; where torch-bearers awaited them, to the subterranean river and lake of Rabka. Nor did the Count pause until he stood upon the brink of that black and silent sea, which assuredly is one of the wonders of the world.

"Here, Countess, is the lake of Rabka. I think you will not wish to go farther to-day."

She did not answer him. The magic of the place was beyond all words. And the silence of that windless, waveless water—the silence and the mystery!

Extending, it may be, a full mile from the place where they stood, this black pool would have been but as a lake of ebony save for the torches which flashed gold upon its unruffled surface from many a passing boat or jettisoned their beams to discover a thousand marvels of the crystal rock.

Dark hulls sped by constantly, the hulls of the ships of mystery, ferried by no son of Erebus. From time to time a cry came across the water and was answered back in tones of savage assent or merry mockery. The rocks themselves could show you the shadowy figures of men and women creeping in and out of the crevices as rabbits from a warren. There were even children playing upon the summits of the precipices, whence the touch of a hand would have sent them headlong to the water below. These were the concern of none. Had not their young eyes gazed too often upon the floating dead who were Rabka's tribute to her criminals? Let the lesson be learned that the fittest of them should live, even as the animals.

The Count had sent the young officer for a boat, and this now appeared at the water's edge—a sorry, gilded barge, wherein Philip the Wise, Ulusia's famous ancestor, had been wont to visit the lake in the days of the golden age. Herein, with the little nut-faced Baroness, whose awe was too deep for words, with Rudolph and ten oarsmen, Ulusia set out to see the lake. A police boat followed them, and another crazy craft full of musicians who played ancient instruments discordantly. They passed from point to point, here discovering the wonders of new caves, there of the cascades which gushed in silver splendour from the black and forbidding rocks. And so, at last, they came to the island and there they saw the man.

CHAPTER IV.

JURA THE WISE.

SOME rockets had been discharged to illuminate the natural roof, itself one of the marvels of Rabka; and as these were fired the island and its master were disclosed.

Ulusia perceived a little round house carved from a giant pillar of the rock, and before this a terrace sloping to the water's edge, and upon the terrace a man of immense stature. Wearing breeches of dark blue cloth and a fine shirt above it, his legs were bare to the knees, his feet shod with rugged sandals. In his hand he carried a heavy staff or club, and his long, unkempt hair was imprisoned by a round Greek cap in whose folds a number of small diamonds gleamed.

To Ulusia's immediate question: "Who is that man?" Count Rudolph answered as readily: "He is the master of the boats, Jura, a ne'er-do-well." And then he added: "I do not think you need trouble about him, Countess."

Ulusia thought upon it for an instant and then she asked—

"Is not he the rebel of whom my uncle has spoken? Do you not call him Jura the Wise?"

"It is so. There are always people ready to ascribe wisdom to discontent."

"Being themselves discontented. Please let me see this rebel for myself, Count. I wish to speak to him."

He laughed, but gave the necessary command.

"He will be greatly flattered—his boast is silence."

"Then I am sure that he is a wise man."

They approached the rocks upon the words, and some of the torchbearers raised their flares aloft that the figure of the man might be perceived more clearly. This near inspection did not belie the strength and dignity which distance had suggested. The fellow



"Down their ranks Ulusia passed in Bishop Heinrich's company."

must have been at least six feet three in height, his limbs were enormous, his face that of a Greek who had won strength in northern climes. He looked down upon them majestically, but did not utter a single word.

"They call you Jura the Wise," said Ulusia, as the boat came grinding along the terrace before his house. He bent his head in assent.

"Is it true that you have never left the mine?"

"It is true."

"And that you have lived all your life upon this island?"

"In so far as any man lives at Rabka, that is true also."

"But you have your freedom, your liberty . . . why do you use it in this way?"

"That the day may come when it may serve me more profitably."

"Is it for that reason they call you a wise man?"

"I do not ask their reasons."

"You know my name; you know that I am the Countess von Erlach?"

"I would name you among ten thousand—you are Ulusia, the daughter of Feodor. Had you been his brother Philip's child, your welcome would be surer."

"Then the people think of me as Count Feodor's daughter?"

"If they think of you at all."

The candour of it piqued her. She would never forget that scene—the torches, the boats, the black gold water, the heroic figure of the man. When he answered her imperiously, her pride suffered, but her reason justified him. Count Rudolph himself did not dare to speak the word which would terminate the interview.

"What message has Jura the Wise for his mistress?"

"He knows neither mistress nor master. Do you beware of both——"

"But if my answer were as yours? I know neither mistress nor master——"

"It would not be true. Riches will be your mistress and self-confidence your master. Beware of them."

"Then you have no other word of wisdom for me, Herr Jura?"

"Those who cannot command should never advise a woman. Some day I will speak with you."

"But not now?"

"Not at your request. It is impossible."

He turned brusquely upon his heel and walked away towards the hut. A loud shout of protest upon his rudeness, uttered by Count Rudolph, remained unanswered. This man feared no one—to Ulusia, whose quick eye read every story at a glance, it was equally clear that others feared him, and none so patently as the Count Rudolph of Trieste.

"Who is the man?" she asked, as the boat was thrust off and turned. The Count could not tell her that.

"Some say that he is the son of Anna, whom the women call the White Witch. It is not known for certain."

"He is privileged, then, to speak as he pleases?"

"In a sense, yes. The men trust his wisdom, the women worship him. He is very useful to us. A hundred of our police could not do the work that he does here."

"Is that why you permit him to tell me that I must beware of you?"

"Of me, Countess?"

"Certainly, he said I was to beware of my master—you heard him, Baroness."

The little Baroness, yellow-faced and shrunken, had not opened her lips since they embarked upon the voyage. She awoke now as from a stupor.

"What were you saying, my child?"

"That I am to beware of my master and my mistress."

"What nonsense! . . . These workpeople are growing very insolent. You must not listen to them, Ulusia."

"I am sure you thought him a very handsome man, Baroness. Do you deny it?"

"I, my child! Why, it is ten years since I asked myself whether any man was handsome or ugly. He seemed a very fine fellow, though—too fine to be in this dreadful place."

"Dreadful, Baroness—do you think it that?"

"I think we have come to the place the good Bishop spoke of in his sermons. I am sure there are evil spirits here."

"Nothing worse than prune-brandy," said the Count affably, and then: "Take courage, dear lady; we are about to leave it."

The boat now approached the mainland, and all prepared to go ashore. The lake behind them was almost in darkness by this time; but the man had come from his hut again and stood, a torch in his hand, at the water's edge. No figure could have matched that glowing scene so perfectly. He seemed to be a King of the Nether World about to summon the Furies from the shadows. The island behind him might well have been his throne.

And such Ulusia could well imagine it to be as she stepped from the boat and followed the Count to the foot of the winding staircase.

CHAPTER V.

THE WHITE WITCH SPEAKS.

It was said at Rabka that none but the old woman Anna and the girl Mathilde had entered the hut of Jura the Wise since the day he took possession of it—fifteen years before Ulusia left her convent at Vienna.

Naturally the life of such a man gained much by its mysteries. The ignorant miners would tell you that he had the gift of second sight and of magic. His mean hut was supposed by them to be adorned with vessels of silver and gold and to harbour the *elixir vitæ*.

In truth it contained little beyond some fine bearskins, a truckle bed, a portrait of the Great Count Philip the Wise, and some volumes of the world's masterpieces. These Jura had read, seeking to know what lay beyond the confines of his kingdom, and what were those glories of the day of which the fables spoke.

Dimly, as in a clouded mirror, scenes of infancy would be shown to him, sometimes in his sleep, more rarely in his waking moods. By the books and the words which the Monk Arthur had spoken, he would have painted these more surely.

Folk said of him that he was a learned man, and in so far as man, who is shut from God's day and the life of the known world, can be learned, that was true.

The Monk Arthur, that devoted priest who spent forty years of his life below the ground with the miners of Rabka, had seen to this before they banished him. He had made a companion, a friend of Jura the Wise. He taught him to read in the books. He had said: "There is no life but that of the spirit." From him came the doctrine that woman is abhorrent and by her comes man's damnation.

In the bowels of the mines such a lesson may have been necessary. Jura knew something of the nameless infamies of the labyrinths; of the scenes that befell when carnival was kept; of the haggard, pitiful wretches who crept out of the darkness when the hour of madness had come.

And more than all this was the lesson of the mission.

"You are to be the king of this place," the monk had said. Jura believed it to be his destiny.

Knowledge in his case was a real measure of power. He knew the men, and they chose him for their leader, the man who had never seen the sun, who would not go to the cities with them, who abhorred women.

And now a woman had come to reign at Rabka, and already, in the brief space of ten days, Rabka was in revolt. It spoke openly of rebellion, of mutiny, of death. Who was Feodor's daughter, to dominate the inheritance the great Philip had left? By what right did she curtail their ancient privileges? Was not their lot hard enough already, that she should impose these new burdens upon them? Why should they suffer her?

How were such as these to know that the burdens they spoke of were not imposed by Ulusia at all, but were the first of many subtle efforts to displace her, made by that shrewd schemer, Count Rudolph of Trieste. Putting it abroad cleverly that he was but the servant of the new mistress, he published his edicts one by one and answered all complaints with a shrug. Henceforth they were to be ruled by a woman. Let the wise men among them remember that when they complained.

Jura, living his solitary life upon the island, heard these tales from many lips and was not deceived by them. He did not believe that the new policy was that of a mere schoolgirl just come out of a convent, and he did not hesitate to say so whenever opportunity offered. Going but rarely to the *cafés* and the clubs, he had no idea of the spirit of rebellion which was abroad. Nor was he able to estimate it properly until the tenth day after Ulusia's visit, when the "Wise Men" or "People's Parliament" sent a deputation to him and begged him to speak for them. This was followed across the water by many of the more turbulent spirits, who seized upon the boats, contrary to all the law of Rabka, and hardly permitted the saner voices to be heard for the clamour.

Now, this was a memorable day. The swarthy miners, clad in their canvas and leather suits, and accompanied by scores of shrieking women, who believed that the new mistress of Rabka would be their undoing, came shouting across the lake to Jura's door and were not to be silenced for a long while, even by that masterful personality. When, at length, they perceived the folly of this, and that the one in whom their greatest hope of succour lay was about to turn his back upon them, they consented to let the

deputation speak, punctuating every sentence with a howl of rage and swearing the "black death" against their oppressors.

"There are to be police at the Parliament; Jura, the woman has decreed it."

"The schools are to be shut; the children are to go above, Jura, they are to be taken from us."

"They talk about inspecting our houses. . . . There's a fine thing for you; they want to peep into our cupboards and see what we keep there."

"The sick are to go to the town: God help those who ail if the woman gets her way with them!"

"Help us, Jura; she will listen to you."

He heard them patiently, and when a savage woman, leaping to the bank by his side, brandished a knife and cried: "Aye, here's what she'll listen to"—a look and a gesture sent her cowering to the boat again. You could hear the very ebbing of the water upon the island "hard" when Jura spoke to them.

"My friends," he said, "first be sure that the evil you imagine is not your good. I have seen this woman, and my judgment credits her with none of these things. She is still a child, and by what miracle has she inherited the wisdom which sends the sick where they will be cared for and the children where they will get knowledge? So, I say, seek out her advisers first and charge them—but not to your disadvantage. There are some things which should have been done a long while ago at Rabka and will be no worse for a woman's doing. These will find us not without gratitude—but for the other matters you mention, and chiefly concerning the police, you know well what answer we shall make."

"You will make it in our name, Jura?"

"That I do not promise—are there not leaders among you?"

"We have no leader like Jura the Wise. Will you not go to her?"

They took it up in a resounding cry which rang in a thousand echoes beneath that mighty vaulted roof, and was heard afar even in the remoter caves where the dark secrets lay. Would he not help them? Would he not go to the woman? To all of which he could but repeat the question: "Had they not other leaders?" and was still wrestling with them when the police appeared upon the far shore and, drawing their sabres, began to beat the people back. Soon they were in possession of some of the boats and, threatening to fire upon the mob if it did not instantly disperse, they drove the rioters headlong.

Jura, the torch still in his hand, watched the scene from the door of his house, and began to perceive with what reason his fellows had appealed to him.

It had been no offence in the old time to come to Jura the Wise for counsel, nor had the authorities interfered with such meetings of the workmen as were held on the lake-side to discuss the common weal. To-day a new spirit prevailed. He saw men struck down with the flat of sabres, women hustled brutally, and even the children maltreated. And in response he heard the people cry: "Kill her—kill the woman!" Surely Rabka had changed much in the brief days since Feodor's daughter came from Vienna to remind them that the son of Philip was dead.

He was alone by this time, the water had been cleared of the boats, and the miners driven back to the workings. True, there were voices to be heard from time to time, and these would come from the crags of the rocks, where many a fugitive sheltered, or from the mouths of dark tunnels of which even the police were afraid.

For the rest, this dark world might have been unpeopled; and when Jura had regarded it sadly a little while, he extinguished his torch, and, entering a boat, he cast it off and rowed away rapidly towards the eastern galleries, where all was desolation and silence.

The lake runs east and west at Rabka, and it is at the western end—just as in the great towns of the upper world—that the riches and splendour of the mines are to be found.

Eastward there are the disused workings, forgotten halls of a dead magnificence, and the black river itself flowing in a vast chasm whose walls glitter with a thousand facets of the crystal rock, and whose roof is one of the wonders of the world.

Through this fearful gorge, driving his boat with powerful oars, Jura now sped upon his self-imposed mission. No stories of the place affrighted, nor did its difficulties delay him. A pilot upon a river abandoned by all—nay, dreaded as the very abode of the ultimate terrors—he needed no lantern to guide him, recalled no fable to abate his courage. Cascades rippling the placid waters were but a play of foam upon his heated face. The gaping mouths of tunnels and galleries suggested no monstrous creatures, but rather a security of retreat where none should follow him. By these he sped until a good mile lay between him and the island of the lake; then driving his boat to the



"'What message has Jura the Wise for his mistress?'"

bank, he secured it to a crag of the rock and sprang nimbly ashore.

It was black dark here—the faint rays of light which illumined the river lower down were lost in the contractions of the chasm. But Jura had a lantern to his hand, and when he had lighted it, he climbed the steep a little way; and, entering a narrow tunnel, he followed it, perhaps, two hundred yards until it opened out into a spacious apartment, itself giving way to a still larger room where there were many signs, not only of inhabitation, but even of luxury beyond all expectation.

Rugs of bearskin covered the floors of this rocky cave; there were lamps of an Oriental fashion depending from its lofty roof, and shedding a subdued glow upon many a quaintly fashioned chair or bureau, and even upon pictures of some merit which decorated its walls. An open grate set cunningly in a crevice permitted a cheery fire, and showed a savoury stew the unknown cook was preparing. The bed itself had a great black crucifix above, with a figure of the Christ in pure gold. A table of Spanish mahogany was laid for two persons, and the glass and silver upon it would have done no discredit to the castle of the Lady Ulusia herself. Jura cast one glance upon this table, and then, drawing a chair a little way back from the fire, he sat and waited patiently, listening to the ticking of an old clock and anon to its chime. Time had so little to do with such as he.

"Is it you, my son?"

"It is I, little mother."

"I said that you would come to-day—I have prepared for you."

"Why did you say it of this day, little mother?"

"The hour is at hand. What should keep you? Come, my son, we will eat and drink, and then you shall tell me."

A little old woman, white-skinned and with hardly a wrinkle upon her chubby face, had entered as he sat; but so silently that even his quick ear did not detect her footstep. An observer would have noticed that her hands were stony white, while her hair was the very colour of the white walls which sheltered her. He would have admitted also that her eyes were merrily blue, and her movements surprisingly agile for so old a creature. This woman the people named Anna, the White Witch. They believed that she ruled the eastward galleries, and called evil spirits and fearsome creatures of the rocks to her aid. The very superstition was her security. Not for a thousand golden crowns would a miner have dared this sanctum. She was safer in her cave than any noble in his castle.

"So you expected me to-day, little mother?"

"I have told you so, my son."

"What do you mean by saying that the hour has come?"

She filled him a glass of the golden wine, and heaped meat upon his plate. The love of a mother for a son was evident in all her acts.

He, the Wise Man Jura, was the mainspring of her life. She had lived the patient years because of him.

"I mean, my son, that the time has come when these gates will be open to you. Twenty years and more you have obeyed me. The hour is at hand when I shall ask obedience no more."

Jura lifted his glass, but he could not hide from her the deep flush of colour which suffused his pale cheeks, nor the trembling hand which betrayed his agitation.

"Would you give me the day, little mother?"

"As you say—the day, my son."

"I am to go out to the world, to the land of the dreams, to the cities of which the monk spoke, to the earth upon which the sun shines—will my eyes bear to look upon such sights, little mother?"

"They will bear it, my son—for a woman's hand will lead you."

"Your hand, then——"

"Nay, another's hand, my son—as it was appointed. Have I not promised you this from the beginning?"

"You have promised me liberty and the dominion over men. The monk spoke of sacrifice and the world beyond. I hear two voices, but cannot choose between them, little mother."

"You will choose to-day. Have you forgotten what the people said? I was upon the lake when they came to you. They said: 'Kill her—kill the woman and the stranger!' Were you deaf to that, Jura, son?"

He thought upon it a little while, watching her face curiously.

"Count Rudolph is very clever," he said at last; "he would embitter the people against her. Many of the things he would do are wise, but there are others which are foolish, and Rabka has no patience. He would send the woman back to Vienna—or shut her in the Castle where she will be

impotent. So much I have divined. But what has this to do with me, Anna, mother?"

A strange smile crossed the old woman's face.

"What has it to do with you, my son? Why, I will tell you. He will shut her in the Castle of Rabka, but the key will be in your hand. Twenty years and more it has been waiting you—to-day I give it over to you, that you may unlock the gate."

She rose from her seat, and fumbling with a great bunch of ancient keys, she unlocked the drawer of a buffet and began to empty it. Here was stored an ancient dress of a Gallician noble of twenty years ago, and beneath it, in a little case of vellum, an ornament of pure gold. This the old woman examined with trembling fingers, and eyes to which the tears had gushed. And yet it was no more than a little golden rose with an inscription in the Latin tongue.

"Here is the key which will unlock the gate, my son. Wear it on your heart where the people may see it. My duty is done—but yours begins to-day."

Jura had learned to obey the "little mother" since he was a mere child—these caves had sheltered him from his very infancy. A habit of obedience, but more than that, a strange sense of impending change, bade him listen to the old woman reverently.

"What would you then, Anna, mother? What would you have me to do?"

"Go this night to the Castle. Let your judgment guide you even as the monk has taught. If she be our enemy, kill her as the people wish; if she be a friend, save her and show her to the people."

"I will go as you command, little mother; I will do your bidding."

She knew that it would be so, knew that she had but to command, and he would obey. He stood to her for all human love and its interests—and she was sending him, it might be, to his death. This thought brought the tears anew to her eyes.

"It may be, son, that I shall never see you again."

"The good God forbid that, mother!"

"But you will remember the little mother—always, Jura?"

He stood up and caught her in his giant arms.

"Have I aught but thee—has this dark world shed light upon my path that was not of thy love? Mother—if I forget thee!"

She kissed him as one would kiss a little child.

"You go to the sun, Jura; but you will return again to the night. Almighty God guard you; I have done my duty."

(*To be continued.*)

AN EPITAPH.

HERE a gentle poet lies,
Hurt to death by stinging flies.
Hush thy laughter, whisper low.

He hath more joy in the swift flight
Of some shy star that flew the night,
Than all thy laughter e'er could know.

If thou hadst tears to welcome grief,
The sharpest arrows in her sheaf
Found in his pitying breast their home.

He knew the swift bee's wandering way,
The music of its roundelay,
Its city sweet of honeycomb.

The little leaves' soft melody,
That whisper on the secret tree,
Gave to his song its mystic tune.

His path was on the gipsies' road,
On the high hills he held abode,
His lamp the shimmering moon.

Down to the valley did he spring,
To share the treasures he did bring
Within the casket of his heart.

A glimpse was here of heaven's blue,
Tears for their grief and laughter too.
To all he fain would give a part,

So when they saw a bird or flower,
They too would know the poet's hour,
And from their lips his song would flow.

But in the vale the stinging flies
Hurt him to death. Now cold he lies!
Hush thy laughter, whisper low.

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER.

BIANCA DRINKS.

By NORMAN INNES,

Author of "My Lady's Kiss," "The Surge of War," "The Lonely Guard," etc.



— GIAN DEL OMBRE—have much on my soul. I own it, yet at the last I look for God's mercy, seeing I did two lovers a service, albeit half-a-score Rachetti died in our house at my hand.

They loved each other well, my brother Giulio and the Lady Bianca, in those old days in Bari, but the poverty of our house barred the way to their marriage, and, besides, the blood-feud between us and the Rachetti still smouldered. Old Lorenzo Rachetti, to give him his due, was for letting the lovers have their will. It was his sons, Ercole, Andrea, and Tomasino, who swore by the patron of our town that they would not see their sister cast away upon a beggar, as they phrased it. Awhile the pair waited, hoping for some betterment in my brother's estate, he doing his utmost to advance his fortunes in the service of the Count of Benevento, the woman pinning her faith to the mercy of the Saints, and seeking to turn her kinsmen's hatred for her lover. But my lord of Benevento himself fell upon evil times, and in his ruin Giulio shared, upon which the hope and high courage of the Lady Bianca first wavered. About this time, as it fell out, there comes to Bari one Giuseppe Ortegna, a friend of the youngest of the Rachetti, a gallant of some fame in Manfredonia, who, laying hot siege to the fairest in our city, caught her fancy and in the end swept all thought of my brother from her heart. Not that the woman yielded without a struggle—as in features, so in honour, she was peerless—yet in such matters circumstance must ever play its part, and who shall say that Bianca di Rachetti erred, if to her it seemed that behind this welter of mischance lay no less than the touch of the Almighty finger. Thus Fate parted these two, to the great joy of our enemies' faction, who, since times were lawless in Bari, seized the occasion for fanning to flame the embers of the feud between the two houses that had all but died in the city. In open daylight our servants were set upon and beaten by the Rachetti, and but for my puny frame and the hump upon my back, I should doubtless have come in for a share of this rough handling. Against Giulio, however, even the boldest ventured nothing, and perhaps it was rather the dread of his vengeance, of his ready resource, of his mastery of sword-play, than pity for my wizened body, that won me immunity from attack. Ah! would that Heaven had dowered me with an arm worthy to back my brother in his quarrel! for a shame to my race I knew myself; yet, fool and sinner that I was, I fed my pride with the fancy that in me lay something of my brother's spirit.

And so I come to the day of the Lady Bianca's wedding, whereon about sunset Giulio returned wounded to our house. It had been my hope that he would have kept close within doors that unlucky Thursday, but I saw how it was with my brother—there was no peace for him within four walls. Of the anguish that racked him, let those judge who have been in a like ill case. I never set eyes on him the morning through, and it was not till about noon that he passed me upon the stairway, saying very bitterly that he had business on his hands in the town and that naught should stay him. Of the happenings of that afternoon I know but as much as my brother himself told me. He went forth alone, and by luck of the worst fell in with the bridal train on its passage from the great church of San Niccolo to the Rachetti Palace that stands looking out upon the sea. It was hard by the market-place that he met them. Giulio was no coward, and feared fifty no more than five, but of his great love for the Lady Bianca, and for his own honour's sake being loth to be drawn into a quarrel, would have slipped into a narrow alley to avoid the throng of folk, young and old, priests, idlers, friends of the newly wed pair, and their followers. Fortune, however, had ordered it otherwise, for Tomasino, the youngest and

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"Spied my brother as he turned into the byway."

headiest of these Rachetti, spied my brother as he turned into the byway, and some madness being abroad that day in our sea-girt, sun-kissed city, no sooner had the young man clapped eyes on him than, with the shout of a hunter cheering on his hounds, he too dashed down the alley. What followed I can scarce set down particularly. So far as I have gathered, half-a-score of the rabble of the town followed at the Signore Tomasino's heels with an outcry that brought wondering faces to door and lattice, though Giulio never so much as mended his pace, but, choosing a spot where the passage narrowed somewhat, swung round upon his pursuers, his blade bared, to slip in the act of turning, taking Messire Tomasino's steel beneath his shoulder as he fell. Cries and laughter sank hushed; the revellers were taken aback. Their leader, flushed with liquor though he was, had scarce looked for an ending like to this. As Giulio regained his feet the other sprang backwards—better face a wild cat wounded

than a del Ombre; and at the same instant half-a-dozen, drawn by the uproar, came running from the market—our house had ever the love of the folk of the quays and wharves. At the sight of these, panic seized the rufflers, who broke suddenly, followed by the youngest of the Rachetti, whom my brother forbore to pursue, crying to the newcomers that it was no more than a drunken frolic.

Thereat Messire Tomasino turns.

"Frolic?" cries he, all flushed for the miscarriage of his jest, shamed too, doubtless, at the flight of his underlings, and not without a black regret perhaps that he had not made an end of his enemy. "A frolic, signore? By San Niccolo, 'tis a frolic, then, that shall have its ending in your house this very night."

"What did the rogue mean? What will come of it, think you?" I asked, as I bathed my brother's hurt, a flesh wound beneath the shoulder, a span long, if of no great depth.

"Who knows?" he answered. "Let the night prove its evil."

"But if they come?" I hazarded, lost in amazement.

My elder's face grew hard and set; otherwise his bearing spoke utmost indifference.

"If they come, they will come. Can we stay them? Rather we must welcome them, Gian."

Welcome them? The Rachetti? These who had wrought us such despite? For a while I did not answer, my heart was all too hot.

"But we have friends," I stammered at length. "There are the Molini, the Chiurri, who would stand by us. I will go——"

My brother paused in the act of drawing on the sleeve of his doublet, and answered me very gravely.

"Go not," said he. "Must the world be witness of my shame? If they come, I say, we shall welcome them worthily, Gian, for the sake of the best of these Rachetti."

Such indifference was beyond me. That my brother should so lightly regard the shame that our enemies designed was beyond my wit and conceiving.

"You suffer this!" cried I in amazement.

Giulio turned upon the stairway and, looking back, answered, his face white as the marble against which he leant.

"And wherefore not? Having suffered so much, think you I shall find this hard?"

Onwards, upwards he went, wearily for the stiffness of his shoulder, yet I fancied with the flicker of a smile upon his face. Whether in this I was right or wrong, for certain I know that I could have laughed outright at the thought of the welcome Messire Tomasino and his crew might meet with in our house.

It was sunset when my brother left me in the inner hall, and no sooner did I hear the jar of a door swung-to in the distance above me, than I sought old Beppo, the steward.

"Wine," said I, "wine of our best, and the silver flagons."

"Wine, signoretto?" stammered the greybeard. "Wine for these dogs of Rachetti. Nay, we should give our blood rather?"

But a few moments since I had been of his opinion, but this Beppo, a staunch fighter in his day, had not the wits of the hunchback.

"Do my bidding!" cried I shortly. It was my brother's whim that we should welcome the Rachetti, and I would not thwart his fancy. So the old man drew the wine, filled the flagons, and set them upon the board beneath the swinging lamp. I watched him narrowly the while, and I fancy he looked as narrowly at me.

"Shall I bar the door, signore?" he asked when his work was done.

"Nay, go," was my reply. "I will see to the barring of the door."

When he had gone, I glanced forth down the darkening street, shrinking back at the sight of a child at the further end, swung-to the door, made it fast, and stood watching the play of the lamplight upon the cups and flagons, a strange throbbing at my heart. Then I went to my chamber, tiptoeing up the stairway and along the corridor as though no better than some night-thief, opened the door very softly, and crossed the room to a small cabinet fixed in the wall beside my bed. Cold struck the hanging crucifix as my fingers touched it in the darkness. I shuddered, but, buoying myself with the fancy that my heart was of the same stout stuff as my brother's, fell to groping in that cupboard with hands so unsteady as to set the phials within ringing one against another. It seemed that an ice-cold wind eddied about me as I returned down the corridor and so by the stairs to the chamber below, it seemed that the lamp burned but ill, that in the corners the shadows lowered strangely.

Within an hour an ever-growing babel in the street, shouts and ringing laughter, proclaimed the fulfilment of the Rachetti's pledge. It was plain they had not looked to find our doors unbarred. For a few



"His enemies gaped upon him."

moments they hesitated upon the very threshold, the foremost peering into our hall like children at a cavern's mouth, in two minds whether to enter or draw back. But though those before would have halted, those behind thrust them onwards, and then, as our enemies flooded the hall, it was my turn to stare for wonder. Messire Tomasino, the cause of the pother, had plucked me by the ear, which he wrenched as if in scorn of my weakness; yet I gaped before me, insensate to the pain, for in the midst of this lawless, wine-flushed crew stood no other than the Lady Bianca.

I could but stare, helpless in Tomasino's clutch till the beardless ruffian flung me aside at the sight of one of worthier mettle.

"Signore," cried he, as I fell to one side of the table as falls a sack, "is not my pledge made good? We Rachetti bring with us our good friend Messire Ortegna and his bride to do honour to your house, and to drink to thee, Giulio del Ombre."

A dozen of them had drawn up to the board, a dozen cups were brimming as I picked myself from the flags; but if my face was hot for shame, there was laughter at my heart. My brother stood midway upon the stairs, looking down at this graceless mockery; the Rachetti and their following were mad with wine. Ortegna, who had not drunk so deep as his comrades, seemed but ill at ease. He of them all looked at me rather than upon my brother, and I chuckled as I marked how he moistened his full, red lips in the silence that followed the youngest Rachetti's speech. Now, whether any sound gave evidence of my inward mirth, or whether the pucker of my face betrayed me, I know not; but the bridegroom on a sudden sets down the cup upon the board, spilling a third of the liquor.

Then Messire Tomasino spoke, filling a goblet and proffering it to the Lady Bianca.

"Come, sister, drink!" cried he, his face a ravel of scornful malice. "Drink to the Signore del Ombre, for the sake of your love that is dead."

At this the woman goes very white, making as though to put the cup from her, and, unless the lamplight played me a trick, there was a tear upon her cheek. Ortegna plucked her by the sleeve.

He said something, I know not what, for Giulio looked at me at that instant, and his face went very white.

"Ettore," he panted, then words seemed to fail him and his eyes sought mine in question. I could not meet that glance, wherein fear, agony, reproach had each its place; I could but bow my head and steal towards the door as his voice rang through the chamber, drawing all eyes upon him.

"Nay, drink not, Madonna! for our dead love's sake, drink not!"

His enemies gaped upon him, and, gaping, their faces changed.

"It is poisoned!" gasped Ercola, the eldest, dashing his goblet to the ground.

"Poisoned!" echoed the others; our wine seemed choking them. "Death to del Ombre!" cried they, and half-a-dozen sprang for the steps, swords naked and daggers drawn.

My brother was wounded, yet with the advantage of the stairs for a while he might have held those fear-whipped roysterers in play; but he had not eyes for his foes, he was looking above, beyond them, at the woman who stood in her bridal gown with the cup that Tomasino had proffered her in her hands. Ah, Saints, my brother was a braver man than I; as my fingers fell trembling upon the door, he cried to the oncoming Rachetti—

"Back, ye fools, stay her, stay her! Drink not, for my soul's peace, for our dead love's sake, Bianca!"

The men paused at his words, though their points were at Giulio's breast, and Tomasino, who, besides being perhaps the evillest of the Rachetti, was also the swiftest in action, springs backwards towards his sister; Ortegna and the others, what with their fear and the liquor they had swallowed since noon, looked wide-eyed from my brother to the woman, and then to me as I paused in two minds with the door ajar.

She stood there in the hush that had followed my brother's appeal, silent, death-white, with the cup in her hands. And then as I gazed, yearning to back my brother's warning, though for shame of my deed my tongue seemed tied, suddenly a crimson glow broke o'er her face as the high winter's dawn upon the snow-crowned Apennines, and her eyes grew wondrous bright.

Then she spoke, and few women, I wis, have spoken as she, or with a courage so steadfast.

"For the sake of our love," said she in her soft, clear voice, "to our soul's peace, Giulio!"

And lifting the cup, Bianca drank.

Giulio del Ombre made no fight of it. He was a strange man was my brother, and since that day I, Gian the hunchback, have gone through the world with a weight on my soul; yet hereafter I look for mercy, as I have said, in the hope that I did two true hearts a service.

THE DREAM-HAWKER.

By UNA ARTEVELDE TAYLOR.

THE little, deserted, grey town lay lost amongst wide plains of pasture and corn-land. A spell of sleep had fallen upon street-ways and market-place; a spell of sleep had fallen upon the taverns and the stalls; upon the wharf by the stone bridge; upon the river that ran under its arches. It lay, too, upon the antiquated hostel, the Inn of the Crescent Moon. The Inn, with its courtyard, stood, a wide frontage of latticed windows, at one side of a wide, irregular, stone-paved square—the central point of the straggling township. Fronting it on the further side was that other Guest-House, the Guest-House of Souls, the great jewel-windowed church of holy Helena. From its high niche the saint's effigy, enshrined above the cavernous gloom of the tower's vaulted entrance, might survey the faded blazon suspended over the Inn threshold, the blazon of a moon like a silver sickle on a blue night strewn with six-pointed stars. And blessed Helena, who in the country-folk's invocation "dreamed a dream," might almost be regarded as the patroness of the whole locality, since to her intercession was also ascribed the Fountain Well, occupying the centre of the square, although in truth its miraculous origin dated from pagan times of drought.

However this might be, it would seem that the saint of dreams was, in some measure, also the donor of sleep, and when the mellow bells dropped their slow, vibrating notes upon sunlit or rain-dark air, each chime was wont to sound as though it rang a serene *requiescat* to the hours that die.

At rare intervals, drawn by the renown of that old church, with its strangely gorgeous windows and architecture of mixed Romanesque and Gothic invention, infrequent guests, coming for a night, would prolong their stay. Some had remained, it was reported, even for a year. The English lad, the last guest the Crescent Moon had entertained, who had sauntered into the town with nothing but a knapsack in his hand—he had stayed and stayed, till his friends had forgotten to wonder at his disappearance. When he, at long last, took his leave of inn and church and fountain, it was with a slow backward look, and, once more in the common world of his old life, was it fancy of his friends, or had he undergone some change? To watch him was like looking at a familiar scene through gauze. The sun shines on summer trees, sparkles on the pond, lies warm on the field of sorrel and clover—only the gauze is between your eyes and all those common things, and by that one thin interposition the near has taken to itself the semblance of the far off.

* * * * *

Now it was harvest-time in the plains. The little lost town, with its winding river, lay a grey blot with leaden ribbon, amongst fields of ripe yellow grains. All day long a man and a woman had been driving towards it through hedgerows powdered white with dust and fragrant with honeysuckle, through meadows where men were reaping, women binding the sheaves, and children playing, gleaning, sleeping; driving on and on under the blueness, intense as blueness can be, of the August sky. Both were of those whose life has run on the levels of what is called happiness. Both had passed their youth, both bore the stamp of unruffled years, tranquil and contented, upon their features. They possessed the goods of the world's giving. They possessed the greater gifts of those children of men who demand no fulfilment of vain illusions. To others the kingdom of passion, with all its crises of joy and despair. They had never knocked at the outermost gate of that temple of the gods. For emotion, a sober affection; for union, a kindly comradeship. What more could man ask of woman or woman of man? Life is life—let us live life as it is, neither as better nor worse, neither as a rapture nor a fever, neither as an ecstasy nor as a madness! Thus they had lived it, unexpectantly, monotonously, calmly, with the sedate record of ships anchored in wind-sheltered havens.

Chance had brought them to the plain-

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lands, chance had directed their summer-day wanderings to the little world-forsaken town. They had reached its first outskirts; dismantled tenements, cottages disroofed and fallen to ruin, bronzed with dry mosses, overgrown with orange lichens, with lilac-flowering vetches, all told of a drowsy, serene decay.

In small courtyards the verdure of miniature ferns fringed every moist nook, sun-yellow wallflowers, ground-ivies with red, thread-like stalks, pink, spotted and blood-crimson snapdragons rioted in the interstices of crumbling masonry. Nature, wherever she found a vantage-ground, made manifest her abiding desire to efface the handprint of man.

Tired with the heat of the long day, the horse made slow progress as the road, ascending slightly, led through what once had been the western gate in the city ramparts. The two were walking, waiting from time to time to let the dust settle as the wheels of the carriage rattled over the first paving-stones. The heat was lessening, the afternoon drawing to its close, the sun was sinking towards the horizon as they crossed the three-arched stone bridge over the river with its little deserted wharf where coastmen from far off sea villages had once moored their brown-sailed boats and landed their cargoes of silver-scaled fish. Beyond the bridge was a wider street, leading to the market-place.

The market-place was empty, the stalls were bare. Only one figure moved amongst them, the figure of a ragged pedlar. As they approached, he came towards the entrance; a broad hat slouched over his brows, a yellow scarf knotted at his throat, the gold of heavy rings in his ears. The woman paused. "He stands like the toll-gatherer at the gate," she said, and with a quick impulse she laid a coin in the pedlar's hand.

It fell to the ground. With a sudden swiftness the man swung his pack to his shoulders and with long, swinging steps went his way, murmuring to himself in words they could not catch. Soon he turned down a side street, and the bent figure was lost to view.

"A crazy beggar!" the woman's companion laughed. "What made you give him that?"

"I do not know," she answered. "He looked ragged—old—or—was he old?" she asked, hesitating.

"What matter?" the other answered. "Come!"

They passed on.

The low sun shone in their eyes. The air was bathed in a phantasmal splendour of rose and amber lights; the massive square of St. Helena's tower rose high above the roofs, it rose against the radiance in dusky amethyst, shadowed with deep purples, broad streaks of translucent green stretched southward and northward, overhead the sky was still blue.

A silence fell on the woman. Her eyes were dizzy with the glow.

The man broke the silence.

"Do you remember," he asked, "I believe to-day is our wedding-day?"

She laughed. She had remembered that he had forgotten. It is a date even the least emotional women bear in mind; it is the record of a final triumph or—of a final loss.

Behind the houses the belated salesman was crying his wares. Now and then they caught the tones of voices by open windows, or the sound of passing footsteps reached their ears. The woman lingered.

"I will go on—you are tired. It is straight on. Shall I?" her companion said.

She assented, she would follow more slowly—he would make all ready at the Inn.

He left her. In the windless heat the copper-coloured pigeons flew heavily homewards, with iridescent breast-feathers catching gleams of metal from the sunset. She was conscious of a drowsy lassitude, her eyes were fixed on the crimson blaze of the west. Glass windows became sheets of flame as they reflected the sunrays. She felt as if she were surrounded by some wild transformation scene of colours at a fantastic pantomime.

The monotonous voice of the wandering hawker haunted her ears. He was still crying his goods. The cry came nearer, receded, came nearer again, as she moved on with laggard feet. At length once more his tattered figure came into sight bent double under his heavy pack. He looked this way and that, paused here, then hurried by—halted—then he was coming towards her on the opposite pavement. She watched him mechanically.

"Who will buy——?" his cry, muffled, husky, was close at hand. Perhaps she was tired, tired with the long day's drive, with the sun-glare, with the tremulous quiver of heat on the high-roads, with the breath of little parched winds which fanned the leaves only to hotter languor. She was exhausted with an exhaustion she had never experienced. And surely her ears, her brain were playing her false—or what was that ragged salesman crying?



"The market-place was empty, the stalls were bare. Only one figure moved amongst them, the figure of a ragged pedlar."

"Dreams! Dreams! Dreams!"

Yes, she was sure, now.

"Dreams, who will buy—— ?"

The colour-curtain changed. The rose-glow had burnt to orange—the tower reared itself above, a black-purple shadow, unreal as a vision, sombre, yet suggesting a dark transparence. She who cared nothing for such things was aware that she had never seen anything so beautiful in all the world of her narrowed life-days.

The pedlar came closer—he was crossing the street: he stood beside her; he halted abruptly, and her eyes met his. His eyes were young, not old, they were sea-blue, keen as a hawk's in the sun-bronzed face, their gaze was like a touch as it fell on her. She heard him laugh softly.

"Dreams! Dreams! Dreams to sell—a dream to sell!"

* * * * *

"What kept you so long? I was afraid you had lost the way," the man said when presently she reached the Inn. "I was just coming to look for you."

He did not notice that she gave no answer to his question, as she entered, with him, the doorway of the Crescent Moon.

* * * * *

It was some two hours later. In the silver-green twilight of the day that had ended and of the night which had begun, the two sat in the garden of the old Inn. Magnolias covered the walls, filling the air with over-mastering fragrance, trumpet-lilies bloomed ghost-white in the flower-beds. The woman watched in silence the gradual rising of the copper-coloured disc where the harvest moon ascended a steel-blue sky—the great globe seemed hanging in vacancy, it belonged neither to earth below nor yet to heaven above. Presently her companion left her to pace up and down the moss-tufted walk.

"How silent you are!" he exclaimed after a while, coming back to where she sat. "Are you tired, or shall we see what the town can show by moonlight?"

"Tired?" she moved at once. "Not tired, no; how should I be tired? Has there ever been such a night?" she added almost under her breath.

Together they sauntered out through the arched entrance of the courtyard. Amidst the white sheen the church stood in a dim mystery of beauty.

"It looks as if it wanted to speak," the woman said. "It is watching us, see!"

Her finger pointed where one stained window, the window near some inner lamp-lit shrine, burned like a live ruby in a black-walled transept. Hitherto her unaccustomed silence only had awakened the man's passing notice. Now something unfamiliar in her voice caught his attention, a note in it was new, the words, absently spoken, were strangely unlike her.

"What?" he said, "what are you saying?" Then, looking at her more closely: "You are overtired. Go back and rest. I believe you are half asleep already."

"Oh, no." She drew her hand over her eyes as if to brush aside some floating cobweb. "No, no, I am wide awake."

She seated herself on the stone steps of the Fountain Well a few paces back. Half the square lay in light, half in the deep shadow of church and tower. And the ruby window burned on, an eye watching them in the dark, or—was it a signal? The whole town slept, dumb in its midnight sleep. The meagre drip of the exhausted fountain-jet was the one pulse that beat in the stillness. The man's eyes were fixed on the ebony water in the shallow basin at his feet. A quarter-hour chimed from the tower. Then there was a far-away sound in the dusk of silence.

"Hush!" said the woman, lifting her head. "Hush! listen!"

Her companion turned sharply towards her. An unwonted disquietude was gaining possession of his mind. She was so curiously different from her old self, yet he could hardly say in what the difference lay.

"What are you listening to? What is it?" he asked. Then he too listened. The voice in the distance was nearer, more audible. "What are they crying so late?" he said, as he caught its sound more clearly. "It is a strange hour to choose."

"Not strange, not strange," the woman murmured, smiling to herself. "It is only——"

"Only what?" The man tried to break away from the impression which every moment grew on him. It seemed to him that she had passed into some remote solitude; as if they two, side by side in that slumbering town, were each alone and apart, as if an immense space divided them, as if in very truth for him, for her, the other was not there. He laid his hand on her shoulder. "I tell you, you are half asleep," he said, bending over her.

She was very pale, but her eyes as she



"Almost unawares he barred the vagrant's path with out-held hand. 'Have you none left for me—for me also?' he cried."

raised them to his were full of a great surprise, a surprise of an unlooked-for joy.

"It is the dream-seller," she said. "Buy! Will you not also buy?"

The vague dread at the man's heart took sudden shape, it defined itself into a terror.

"Come back to the Inn." He stooped and half lifted her from the stone step. "Come back now, at once," he went on urgently. "The sun has been too much for you; you must come back and sleep."

Smiling, she laid her arm round his neck with an all-unaccustomed gesture.

"Buy!" she whispered in his ear.

He led her back to the Inn, tending her as never before he had tended her. A dumb fear, a solicitude that ached with a pang at his heart, stirred within him. He laid her

on the lavender-scented sheets, her hair threading the pillows as if with the fine gold filagree tracery of old Italian tissues, the "golden wire" of old poets' songs. Her pallor was gone, there was a flush where the lashes of her closed eyes touched her cheek; her lips were red as rose-berries. He watched by her till she slept—it was the slumber of a happy child. Fear left him. He smiled at himself because he had been afraid. She had only been tired, all was well with her. Leaning against the framework of the open window, he looked out. The scene had again shifted. The phantasmal mystery of the old church was no longer in shadow, a soft illumination was spreading over it. The moon was sinking, but great stars covered the sky with lanceheads of white fires. A film of silver-green, faint as chrysolite, lay over the stonework of the houses enclosing the square. It was so still that he could even from that distance hear the drip of the fountain-jet. Mechanically he counted the number of strokes as St. Helena's clock chimed again. Then, listening as the last vibration quivered into stillness, he heard the sound of a footfall; someone, surely, passed near the acacia tree at the further side of the square; someone lurked there, under the red ruby window which gleamed across the dividing space.

"Dreams! Dreams!" This time the cry was plain.

Who was it thus haunting the summer night? He would go out and see for himself. He glanced at the bed, at the sleeper. Yes, all was well with her, and he would come back at once; she was safe, she would not miss him. He opened the door with heedful care lest she should waken. Down the stairway, through the little court; out beneath the arched entry the air met him with a breath of warmth. His eyes searched the star-twilight; surely there, along the pavement skirting the houses that bounded the square to the left of the Inn, someone moved—moved slowly from house to house. As he looked a little way off, some ten houses to the left, a window opened in the wall. A sleeper had heard and wakened at the cry? Below the window the wandering crier stopped. From the stone window-ledge above, a hand reached down. From the pavement below, an arm stretched up to meet the hand, then the hand was quickly withdrawn, the window was shut to. The figure upon which the man's eyes were riveted came nearer, he could see it now clearly. It was—he knew it well—the crazy beggar of the market-place! Yet no—*he* had been bent, he stooped like an old man, this haunter of the night-fall was erect, strong, lithe——

"It is not he—it is not the same," the man murmured to himself; "he was old and bent."

"Yes, it is he," the Hawker stood at his side—he laughed low as he spoke. "But my pack is light now, very light, very empty. They are sold, my wares. *She*"—he pointed to the window of the Inn—"she bought the best of all."

He made as if he would go by.

"Who will buy? who will buy?" The cry was almost a whisper, yet the listener's pulses beat as he heard it. "Buy—you also buy!" the woman had begged—the woman who lay within, her hair like threads of gold and her lips like the scarlet berry of the rose. Buy—what? Almost unawares he barred the vagrant's path with out-held hand. "Have you none left for me—for me also?" he cried.

* * * * *

Had the heat of the summer night fevered his brain? he asked himself a moment later. He stood alone; the Hawker was gone, his cry was dying away, muffled, jarring, insistent, in the streets behind the square.

Then a touch was on his arm. The woman was with him, smiling as she laid her hand in his.

"I could not sleep longer, it was too beautiful a night for sleep. I had to come. I knew I should find you."

"I wanted you," he said. "I never knew what night could be till now. I wanted you," he repeated.

They passed beneath the feathery foliage of the giant acacias. The moon had set, but the ruby window glowed and flamed.

"You have me, heart's beloved." Her hand in his stirred.

"And still I want you," he answered.

It seemed to her that a wind-wave of youth, the whole youth they two had missed, was sweeping towards them from some immense doorway thrown open in the night, from some infinite reservoir of strength and sweetness and fire and dew, where the wings of life were for ever outspread and the passion of life was for ever upwelling. And that great stream was nearing them, the tree shadows swayed to and fro in the advance guard of its current, the leaves fluttered in its first breath. All the serene years of the tranquil past were effaced, all the unrest of a



"In each rose-light the whole world's beauty was theirs."

great expectancy shook her citadel of peace to its foundations.

"Come!" she cried, "let us go towards it."

"What need? It is already here," the man answered her very thought.

Her eyes filled with the tears of an unmeasurable gladness. That spiritual hurricane had welded thought to thought.

"Our wedding night . . ." she began. "Never, never, before . . ." She broke off. Words had no more use for her. She drew the man's hand across her lips—she let it fall. There was nothing to say, nothing to do; she had passed beyond the joy that seeks for utterance, past the passion that bounds itself in a caress. Life lay within life, heart within heart; lips that touch,

hands that hold, tears, words—these were but love's body, as far removed from her love as the walls of the temple from the flame that burns within it.

"We have never lived." The man took up the thread of her speech, of her muteness. "What have we done with all the lost years? How have we squandered our youth—how have we misspent our life-days?"

She shook her head, setting aside the question. The past for her was not.

"I cannot remember," she smiled. "The arrears are paid." For her, youth, joy, love lay in the hollow of her hand.

He caught the contagion of her supreme oblivion. "Let us make amends for all we have misused," he murmured. And then for him likewise regret itself died.

The wind-wave had swept them to its very centre, at its centre the woman rested her heart's folded wings. Even wonder had ceased; she held joy as her birthright.

They wandered away down streets that seemed as familiar home-places to their feet. Every window was dark; not a light gleamed across the river, not a lantern shone from the moored boats at the wharfside; the water that lapped their planks flowed under the bridge like a moonstone set in silver. Bending over the bridge parapet, they watched the water as it ran by; sometimes speech came to one or to the other, oftener silence came to both. Far in the east a slow paleness gathered, slowly it gilded itself, slowly the floating haze on the horizon caught at its edge the first tinge of rose, and the first cloud-flake floated, like some red petal of the dawn, across the sky. In the water-mirror the shifting colours repeated themselves, rose hues deepened, shot with flame colours, little winds blew fitfully, scattering the tinted thistledown of day-break clouds far and wide over the heavens. A stronger breeze planed the opal surface of the ripples into a sheet of polished steel. There was a rustle in the reed-beds, the brown-flowered rushes shook, a bird wakened, then another, and a swift skimmed the water. Night was over, day was at hand.

In each rose-light the whole world's beauty was theirs; in each little wind, the freshness of all past springs; in each drifting scent of clover from the farther bank, the fragrance of all summer's blossoms; in the touch of hand to hand, the gold of all desires.

"What did you pay for it?" the man asked suddenly.

"All life holds," she said.

There was a pause.

"And you?" she spoke at length.

"I? I do not know." His answer lagged. "I paid——"

"All that you could, dear heart," she ended his broken sentence. "No matter how much, more can no man give."

With one accord they retraced their steps through the still sleeping town, up by the market-place, through the silent streets into the square.

Swallows were darting about the eaves of the houses, the acacia by the Inn, with its silvered leaves, seemed like a ghost-tree against the grey wall. They turned on the very threshold to look back. The windows of the church were struck by the first sunrays, the ruby light was quenched, the whole building was irradiated by shafts of gold. The sun had risen. A swift shadow, as of an immense fear, clouded the woman's face.

"Oh, my heart's beloved!" she cried. "We are not dreaming—say we are not dreaming?"

"Dreaming!" Her companion laughed an untroubled laugh of joy. "Then are dreams life's only worth!"

He drew her across the threshold.

"Come!" he said.

"But the day—the day is here," she murmured.

* * * * *

It was a year ago. Once more the fields were white with corn, August dust lay on the hedgerows, and the scent of honeysuckle and clover filled the air.

Through quiet English lanes a man and a woman were walking side by side. A companion, a lad with keen eyes and restless movements, was with them.

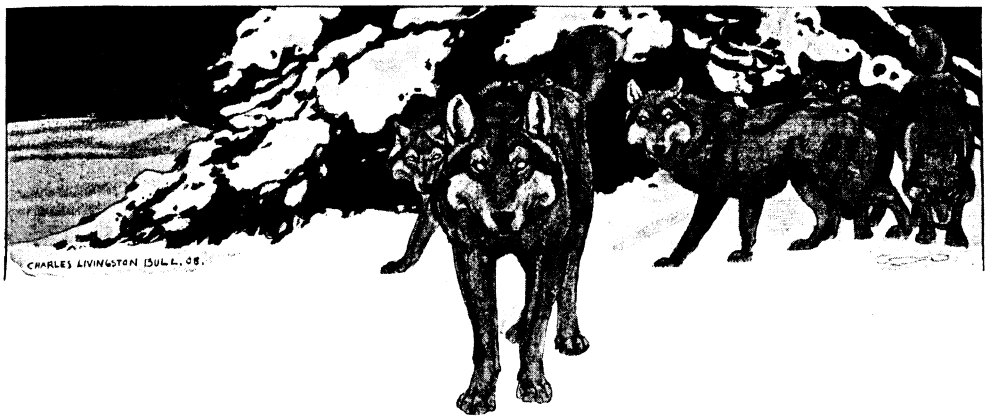
"So you found my lost town among the plains?" he asked with a glance of eager inquiry. "You stayed there?"

"One night," the man answered him.

The lad looked from one to the other. He laughed shortly.

"I thought so," he said.

Over the man, over the woman, a change had come. They lived life as they had lived it before; yet the man's eyes held memory at bay, in the woman's lay an infinite regret. A dream had passed over them—and was gone!



THE GREY MASTER.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

WHY he was so much bigger, more powerful, and more implacably savage than the other members of the grey, spectral pack, which had appeared suddenly from the north to terrorise their lone and scattered clearings, the settlers of the lower Quah-Davic Valley could not guess. Those who were of French descent among them, and full of the old Acadian superstitions, explained it simply enough by saying he was a *loup-garou*, or "werwolf," and resigned themselves to the impossibility of contending against a creature of such supernatural malignity and power. But their fellows of English speech, having no such tradition to fall back upon, were mystified and indignant. The ordinary grey, or "cloudy," wolf of the east they knew, though he was so rare south of Labrador that few of them had ever seen one. They dismissed them all, indifferently, as "varmin." But this unaccountable grey ravager was bigger than any two such wolves, fiercer and more dauntless than any ten. Though the pack he led numbered no more than half-a-dozen, he made it respected and dreaded through all the wild leagues of the Quah-Davic. To make things worse, this long-flanked, long-jawed marauder was no less cunning than fierce. When the settlers, seeking vengeance for sheep, pigs, and cattle slaughtered by his pack, went forth to hunt him with dogs and guns, it seemed that there was never a wolf in the country. Nevertheless, either that same night or the next, it was long odds that one or more of those same dogs who had been officious in the hunt would disappear. As for traps and poisoned meat, they proved equally futile. They were always visited, to be sure, by the pack, at some unexpected and indeterminable moment, but treated always with a contumelious scorn which was doubtless all that such clumsy tactics merited. Meanwhile the ravages went on, and the children were kept close housed at night, and cool-eyed old woodsmen went armed and vigilant along the lonely roads. The French *habitant* crossed himself, and the Saxon cursed his luck; and no one solved the mystery.

Yet, after all, as Arthur Kane, the young schoolmaster at Burnt Brook Cross-Roads began dimly to surmise, the solution was quite simple. A lucky gold-miner, returning from the Klondike, had brought with him not only gold and an appetite, but also a lank, implacable, tameless whelp from the packs that haunt the sweeps of northern timber. The whelp had gnawed his way to freedom. He had found, fought, thrashed, and finally adopted, a little pack of his small, eastern kin. He had thriven, and grown to the strength and stature that were his rightful heritage. And "the Grey Master

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of the Quah-Davic," as Kane had dubbed him, was no *loup-garou*, no outcast human soul incarcerate in wolf form, but simply a great Alaskan timber-wolf.

But this, when all is said, is quite enough. A wolf that can break the back of a full-grown collie at one snap of his jaws, and gallop off with the carcase as if it were a chipmunk, is about as undesirable a neighbour, in the night woods, as any *loup-garou* ever devised by the *habitant's* excitable imagination.

All up and down the Quah-Davic Valley the dark spruce woods were full of game—moose, deer, hares, and wild birds innumerable—with roving caribou herds on the wide barren beyond the hill-ridge. Nevertheless, the great grey wolf would not spare the possessions of the settlers. His pack haunted the fringes of the settlements with a needless tenacity which seemed to hold a challenge in it, a direct and insolent defiance. And the feeling of resentment throughout the Valley was on the point of crystallising into a concerted campaign of vengeance which would have left even so cunning a strategist as the Grey Master no choice but to flee or fall, when something took place which quite changed the course of public sentiment. Folk so disagreed about it that all concerted action became impossible, and each one was left to deal with the elusive adversary in his own way.

This was what happened.

In a cabin about three miles from the nearest neighbour lived the Widow Baisley, alone with her son Paddy, a lad under ten years old, and little for his age. One midwinter night she was taken desperately ill, and Paddy, reckless of the terrors of the midnight solitudes, ran wildly to get help. The moon was high and full, and the lifeless backwoods road was a narrow, bright, white thread between the silent black masses of the spruce forest. Now and then, as he remembered afterwards, his ear caught a sound of light feet following him in the dark beyond the roadside. But his plucky little heart was too full of panic grief about his mother to have any room for fear as to himself. Only the excited amazement of his neighbours, over the fact that he had made the journey in safety, opened his eyes to the hideous peril he had come through. Willing helpers hurried back with him to his mother's bedside. And on the way one of them, a keen huntsman who had more than once pitted his woodcraft in vain against that of the Grey Master, had the curiosity to step off the road and examine the snow under the thick spruces. Perhaps imagination misled him, when he thought he caught a glimpse of savage eyes, points of green flame, fading off into the black depths. But there could be no doubt as to the fresh tracks he found in the snow. There they were—the footprints of the pack, like those of so many big dogs—and among them the huge trail of the great, far-striding leader. All the way, almost from his threshold, these sinister steps had paralleled those of the hurrying child. Close to the edge of the darkness they ran—close, within the distance of one swift leap—yet never any closer!

Why had the great grey wolf, who faced and pulled down the bull moose, and from whose voice the biggest dogs in the settlements ran like whipped curs—why had he and his stealthy pack spared this easy prey? It was inexplicable, though many had theories good enough to be laughed to scorn by those who had none. The *habitants*, of course, had all their superstitions confirmed, and with a certain respect and refinement of horror added: Here was a *loup-garou* so crafty as to spare, on occasion! He must be conciliated, at all costs. They would hunt him no more, his motives being so inexplicable. Let him take a few sheep, or a steer, now and then, and remember that *they*, at least, were not troubling him. As for the English-speaking settlers, their enmity cooled down to the point where they could no longer get together any concentrated bitterness. It was only a big rascal of a wolf, anyway, scared to touch a white man's child, and certainly nothing for a lot of grown men to organise about. Some of the women jumped to the conclusion that a certain delicacy of sentiment had governed the wolves in their strange forbearance, while others honestly believed that the pack had been specially sent by Providence to guard the child through the forest on his sacred errand. But all, whatever their views, agreed in flouting the young school-teacher's uninteresting suggestion that perhaps the wolves had not happened, at the moment, to be hungry.

As it chanced, however, even this very rational explanation of Kane's was far from the truth. The truth was that the great wolf had profited by his period of captivity in the hands of a masterful man. Into his fine sagacity had penetrated the conception—hazy perhaps, but none the less effective—that man's vengeance would be irresistible and inescapable if once fairly aroused. This

conception he had enforced upon the pack. It was enough. For, of course, even to the most elementary intelligence among the hunting, fighting kindreds of the wild, it was patent that the surest way to arouse man's vengeance would be to attack man's young. The intelligence lying behind the wide-arched skull of the Grey Master was equal to more intricate and less obvious conclusions than that.

Among all the scattered inhabitants of the Quah-Davic Valley, there was no one who devoted quite so much attention to the wonderful grey wolf as did the young school-teacher. His life at the Burnt Brook Cross-Roads, his labours at the little Burnt Brook School, were neither so exacting nor so exciting but that he had time on his hands. His preferred expedients for spending that time were hunting, and studying the life of the wild kindreds. He was a good shot with both rifle and camera, and would serve himself with one weapon or the other as the mood seized him. When life, or his dinner, went ill with him, or he found himself fretting hopelessly for the metropolitan excitement of the little college city where he had been educated, he would choose his rifle. And so wide-reaching, so mysterious, are the ties which enmesh all created beings, that it would seem to even matters up and relieve his feelings wonderfully just to kill something, if only a rabbit or a weasel.



"The Grey Master."

But at other times he preferred the camera. Naturally Kane was interested in the mysterious grey wolf more than in all the other prowlers of the Quah-Davic put together. He was quite unreasonably glad when the plans for a concerted campaign against the marauder so suddenly fell through. That so individual a beast should have its career cut short by an angry settler's bullet, to avenge a few ordinary pigs or sheep, was a thing he could hardly contemplate with patience. To scatter the pack would be to rob the Quah-Davic solitudes of half their romance. He determined to devote himself to a study of the great wolf's personality and characteristics, and to foil, as far as this could be done without making himself unpopular, such plots as might be laid for the beast's undoing.

Recognising, however, that this friendly interest might not be reciprocated, Kane chose his rifle rather than his camera as a weapon, on those stinging, blue-white nights when he went forth to seek knowledge of the grey wolf's ways. His rifle was a well-tried repeating Winchester, and he carried a light, short-handled axe in his belt besides the regulation knife ; so he had no serious misgivings as he trod the crackling, moonlit snow beneath the moose-hide webbing of his snowshoes. But not being utterly foolhardy, he kept to the open stretches of meadow, or river-bed, or snow-buried lake, rather than in the close shadows of the forest.

But now, when he was so expectant, the wolf-pack seemed to find business elsewhere. For nights not a howl had been heard, not a fresh track found, within miles of Burnt Brook Cross-Roads. Then, remembering that a watched pot takes long to boil, Kane took fishing-lines and bait, and went up the wide, white brook-bed to the deep lake in the hills whence it launches its shallow flood towards the Quah-Davic. He took with him also for companionship, since this time he was not wolf-hunting, a neighbour's dog that was for ever after him—a useless, yellow lump of mongrel dog-flesh, but friendly and silent. After building a hasty shelter of spruce boughs some distance out from shore, in the flooding light, he chopped holes through the ice and fell to fishing for the big lake trout that inhabited those deep waters. He had luck. And soon, absorbed in the new excitement, he had forgotten all about the great grey wolf.

It was late, for Kane had slept the early part of the night, waiting for moonrise

before starting on his expedition. The air was tingling with windless cold, and ghostly white with the light of a crooked, waning moon. Suddenly, without a sound, the dog crept close against Kane's legs. Kane felt him tremble. Looking up sharply, his eyes fell on a tall, grey form, sitting erect on the tip of a naked point, not a hundred yards away, and staring, not at him, but at the moon.

In spite of himself, Kane felt a pricking in his cheeks, a creeping of the skin under his hair. The apparition was so sudden, and, above all, the cool ignoring of his presence was so disconcerting. Moreover, through that half-sinister light, his long muzzle upstretched towards the moon, and raised as he was a little above the level on which Kane was standing, the wolf looked unnaturally and impossibly tall. Kane had never heard of a wolf acting in this cool, self-possessed, arrogantly confident fashion, and his mind reverted obstinately to the outworn superstitions of his *habitants* friends. But, after all, it was this wolf, not an ordinary, brush-fence wolf, that he was so anxious to study; and the unexpected was just what he had most reason to expect! He was getting what he came for.

Kane knew that the way to study the wild creatures was to keep still and make no noise. So he stiffened into instant immobility, and regretted that he had brought the dog with him. But he need not have worried about the dog, for that intelligent animal showed no desire to attract the Grey Master's notice. He was crouched behind Kane's legs, and motionless except for his shuddering.

For several minutes no one stirred—nothing stirred in all that frozen world. Then, feeling the cold begin to creep in upon him in the stillness, Kane had to lift his thick-gloved hands to chafe his ears. He did it cautiously, but the caution was superfluous. The great wolf apparently had no objection to his moving as much as he liked. Once, indeed, those green, lambent eyes flamed over him, but casually, in making a swift circuit of the shores of the lake and the black fringe of the firs; but for all the interest which their owner vouchsafed him, Kane might as well have been a juniper bush.

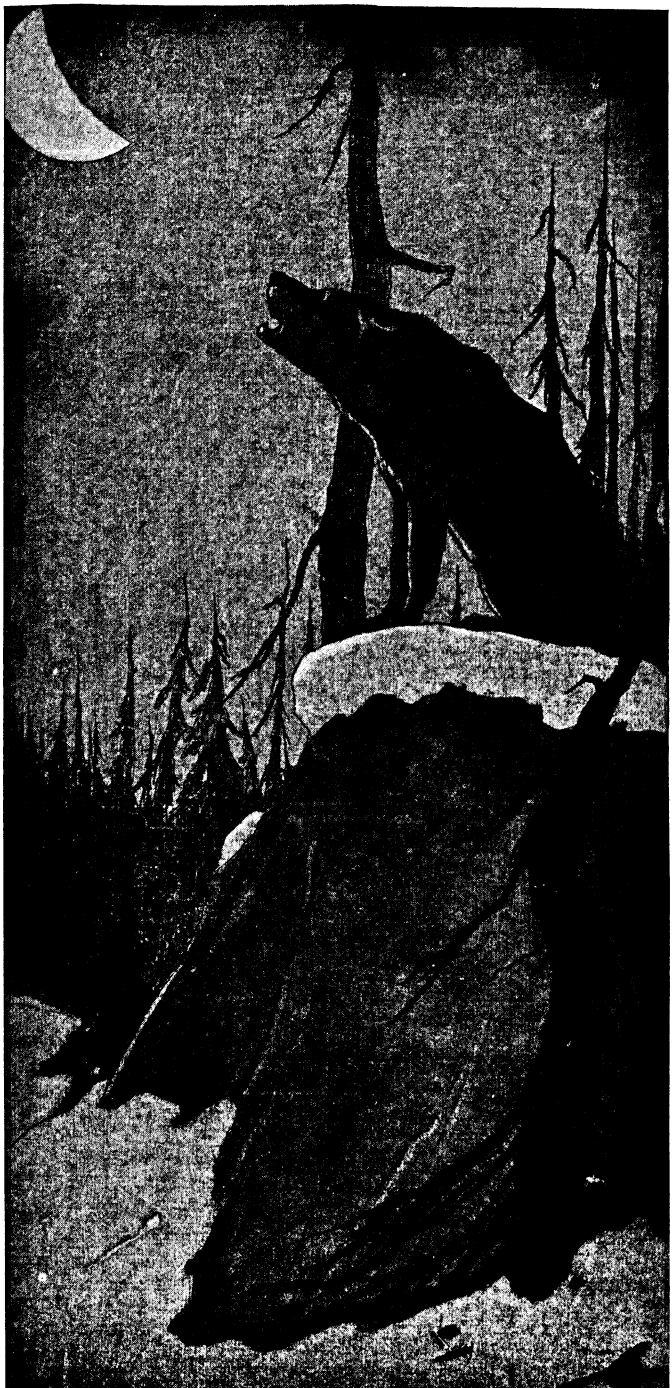
Knowing very well, however, that this elaborate indifference could not be other than feigned, Kane was patient, determined to find out what the game was. At the same time, he could not help the strain beginning to tell on him. Where was the rest of the pack? From time to time he glanced searchingly over his shoulder towards the all-concealing fir-woods.

At last, as if considering himself utterly alone, the great wolf opened his jaws, stretched back his neck, and began howling his shrill, terrible serenade to the moon. As soon as he paused, came far-off nervous barkings and yelpings from dogs who hated and trembled in the scattered clearings. But no wolf-howl made reply. The pack, for all the sign they gave, might have vanished off the earth. And Kane wondered what strong command from their leader could have kept them silent when all their ancient instincts bade them answer.

As if well satisfied with his music, the great wolf continued to beseech the moon so persistently that at last Kane lost patience. He wanted more variety in the programme. Muttering: "I'll see if I can't rattle your fine composure a bit, my friend!" he raised his rifle and sent a bullet whining over the wolf's head. The wolf cocked his ears slightly and looked about carelessly, as if to say: "What's that?" then coolly resumed his serenade.

Nettled by such ostentatious nonchalance, Kane drove another bullet into the snow within a few inches of the wolf's forefeet. This proved more effective. The great beast looked down at the place where the ball had struck, sniffed at it curiously, got up on all fours, and turned and stared steadily at Kane for perhaps half a minute. Kane braced himself for a possible onslaught. But it never came. Whirling lightly, the Grey Master turned his back on the disturber of his song, and trotted away slowly, without once looking back. He did not make directly for the cover, but kept in full view and easy gunshot for several hundred yards. Then he disappeared into the blackness of the spruce woods. Thereupon the yellow mongrel, emerging from his shelter behind Kane's legs, pranced about on the snow before him with every sign of admiration and relief.

But Kane was too puzzled to be altogether relieved. It was not according to the books for any wolf, great or small, to conduct himself in this supercilious fashion. Looking back along the white bed of the brook, the path by which he must return, he saw that the sinking of the moon would very soon involve it in thick shadow. This was not as he wished it. He had had enough of fishing. Gathering up his now frozen prizes, and strapping the bag that contained them over his shoulder, so as to leave both hands free,



"His long muzzle upstretched towards the moon."

companion's prowess now thoroughly established, trotted on heedlessly three or four paces ahead.

Already the shadow of the woods lay half-way across the bed of the brook, but down the middle of the strip of brightness, still some five or six paces in breadth, Kane swung steadily. As he went, he kept a sharp eye on the shadowed edge of his path. He had gone perhaps a mile, when all at once he felt a tingling at the roots of his hair, which seemed to tell him he was being watched from the darkness. Peer as he would, however, he could catch no hint of moving forms; strain his ears as he might, he could hear no whisper of following feet. Moreover, he trusted to the keener senses, keener instincts, of the dog, to give him warning of any furtive approach; and the dog was obviously at ease.

He was just beginning to execrate himself for letting his nerves get too much on edge, when suddenly out from the black branches just ahead shot a long, spectral shape and fell upon the dog. There was one choked yelp —and the dog and the terrible shape vanished together, back into the blackness.

It was all so instantaneous that before Kane could get his rifle up they were gone. Startled and furious, he fired at random, three times, into cover. Then he steadied himself, remembering that the number of cartridges in his chamber was not unlimited. Seeing to it that his axe and knife were both loose for instant action, he stopped and replenished his Winchester. Then he hurried on as fast as he could without betraying haste.

he set out for home at the long, deliberate, yet rapid lope of the experienced snow-shoer; and the yellow dog, confidence in his

As he went, he was soon vividly conscious

that the wolves—not the Grey Master alone, but the whole pack also—were keeping pace with him through the soundless dark beyond the rim of the spruces. But not a hint of their grim companioning could he see or hear. He felt it merely in the creeping of his skin, the elemental stirring of the hair at the back of his neck. From moment to moment he expected the swift attack, the battle for his life. But he was keyed up to it. It was not fear that made his nerves tingle, but the tense, trembling excitement of the situation. Even against those strange, hidden forces of the forest, his spirit felt sure of victory. He felt as if his rifle would go up and speak, almost of itself, unerringly at the first instant of attack, even before the adversary broke into view. But through all the drawn-out length of those last three miles his hidden adversaries gave no sign, save that once a dead branch, concealed under the snow, snapped sharply. His rifle was at his shoulder, it seemed to him, almost before the sound reached his ear. But nothing came of it. Then a panic-mad rabbit, stretched straight out in flight, darted across the fast narrowing brightness of his path. But nothing followed. And at last, after what seemed to him hours, he came out upon the open pastures overlooking Burnt Brook Settlement. Here he ran on a little way; and then, because the strain had been great, he sat down suddenly upon a convenient stump and burst into a peal of laughter which must have puzzled the wolves beyond measure.

After this, though well aware that the Grey Master's inexplicable forbearance had saved him a battle which, for all his confidence, might quite conceivably have gone against him, Kane's interest in the mysterious beast was uncompromisingly hostile. He was bitter on account of the dog. He felt that the great wolf had put a dishonour upon him; and for a few days he was no longer the impartial student of natural history, but the keen, primitive hunter with the blood-lust hot in his veins. Then this mood passed, or, rather, underwent a change. He decided that the Grey Master was, indeed, too individual a beast to be just snuffed out, but, at the same time, far too dangerous to be left at liberty.

And now all the thought and effort that could be spared from his daily duties at the Cross-Roads were bent to the problem of capturing the great wolf alive. He would be doing a service to the whole Quah-Davic Valley. And he would have the pleasure of presenting the splendid captive to his college town, at that time greatly interested in the modest beginnings of a zoological garden which its citizens were striving to inaugurate. It thrilled his fancy to imagine a tin placard on the front of a cage in the little park, bearing the inscription—

CANIS OCCIDENTALIS.

EASTERN NORTH AMERICA.

PRESENTED BY ARTHUR KANE, ESQ.

After a few weeks of assiduous trapping, however, Kane felt bound to acknowledge that this modest ambition of his seemed remote from fulfilment. Every kind of trap he could think of, that would take a beast alive, he tried in every kind of way. And having run the whole insidious gamut, he would turn patiently to run it all over again. Of course, the result was inevitable, for no beast, not even such a one as the Grey Master, is a match, in the long run, for a man who is in earnest. Yet Kane's triumph, when it blazed upon his startled eyes at last, was indirect. In avoiding, and at the same time uncovering and making mock of, Kane's traps, the great wolf put his foot into another, a powerful bear-trap, which a cunning old trapper had hidden near by, without bait. The trap was secured to a tree by a stout chain—and rage, strain, tear as he might, the Grey Master found himself snared. In his silent fury he would probably have gnawed off the captive foot, for the sake of freedom. But before he came to that, Kane arrived and occupied his attention fully.

Kane's disappointment, at finding the splendid prize in another trap than his own, was but momentary. He knew his successful rival would readily part with his claims, for due consideration. But he was puzzled as to what should be done in the immediate emergency. He wanted to go back home for help, for ropes, straps, and a muzzle with which he had provided himself; but he was afraid lest, in his absence, the trapper might arrive and shoot the captive, for the sake of the pelt and the bounty. In his uncertainty he waited, hoping that the trapper might come soon; and by way of practice for the serious enterprise that would come later, as well as to direct the prisoner's mind a little from his painful predicament, Kane began trying to lasso him with a coil of heavy cord which he carried.

His efforts in this direction were not altogether successful, but the still fury which they aroused in the great wolf's breast

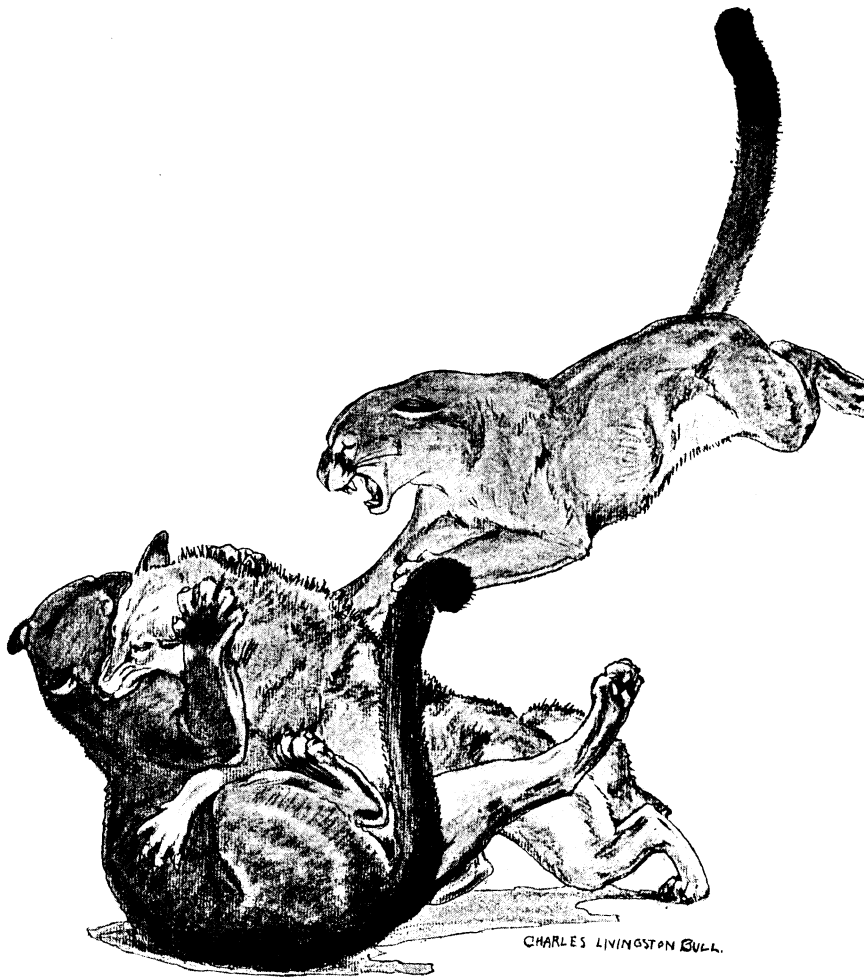
doubtless obscured the mordant anguish in his foot. One terrific leap at his enemy, resulting in an ignominious overthrow as the chain stopped him in mid-air, had convinced the subtle beast of the vanity of such tactics. Crouching back, he eyed his adversary in silence, with eyes whose hatred seemed to excoriate. But whenever the running noose

"I reckon we'll show the varmint now as how he ain't no *loup-garou!*" he remarked, lightly swinging his axe.

But Kane hastily intervened.

"*Please* don't kill him, Dave!" he begged. "*I* want him, bad! What'll you take for him?"

"Just as he stands?" demanded the old



"Then the second puma pounced, with a screech."

at the end of the cord came coiling swiftly at his head, with one lightning snap of his long teeth he would sever it as with a knife. By the time Kane had grown tired of this diversion the cord was so full of knots that no noose would any longer run.

But at this point the old trapper came slouching up on his snowshoes, a twinkle of elation in his shrewd, frosty, blue eyes.

trapper, with a chuckle. "I ain't a-goin' to deliver the goods to yer door, ye know!"

"No," laughed Kane, "just as he stands, right here!"

"Well, seein' as it's you, I don't want no more'n what his pelt'ld fetch, an' the bounty on his nose," answered the trapper.

"All right," said Kane. "You wait here a bit, will you, an' keep him amused so's he

won't gnaw his paw off ; an' I'll run back to the Cross-Roads and get some rope and things I guess I'll be needing."

When he got back with rope, straps, a big mastiff-muzzle, and a toboggan, he found Dave in a very bad humour and calling the watchful, silent, crouching beast hard names. In his efforts to amuse himself by stirring that imperturbable and sinister quiet into action, he had come just within the range of the Grey Master's spring. Swift as that spring was, that of the alert backwoodsman was just swift enough to elude it—in part. Dave's own hide had escaped, but his heavy jacket of homespun had had the back ripped clean out of it.

But now, for all his matchless strength, courage and craft, the Grey Master's game was played out. The fickle Fates of the wild had pronounced against him. He could not parry two flying nooses at once. And presently, having been choked for a few moments into unconsciousness, he awoke to find himself bound so that he could not move a leg, and his mighty jaws imprisoned in a strange cage of straps and steel. He was tied into the toboggan, and being dragged swiftly through the forest—that free forest of which he had so long felt himself master—at the heels of his two conquerors. His only poor consolation was that the hideous, crunching thing had been removed from his bleeding paw, which, however, anguished cruelly for the soothing of his tongue.

II.

DURING the strenuous and dangerous weeks while Kane was jailer to his dreaded captive, his respect for the grim beast's tameless spirit by no means diminished ; but he had no shadow of misgiving as to the future to which he destined his victim. He felt that in sending the incomparable wolf to the gardens, where he would be well cared for, and at the same time an educative influence, he was being both just and kind. And it was with feelings of unmixed delight that he received a formal resolution of gratitude from the zoological society for his valued and in some respects unique donation.

It was about a year and a half later that Kane had occasion to revisit the city of his *Alma Mater*. As soon as possible he hurried to inspect the little gardens, which had already marched so far towards success as to be familiarly styled "The Zoo." There were two or three paddocks of deer, of different North American species—for the society was inclined to specialise on the wild kindreds of native origin. There were moose, caribou, a couple of bears, raccoons, foxes, porcupines, two splendid pumas, a rather flea-bitten and toothless tiger, and the Grey Master, solitary in his cage !

A sure instinct led Kane straight to that cage, which immediately adjoined the big double cage of the pumas. As he approached, he caught sight of a tall, grey shape pacing, pacing, pacing, pacing, to and fro behind the bars with a sort of measured restlessness that spoke an immeasurable monotony. When he reached the front of the cage, Kane saw that the great wolf's eyes were noting nothing of what was about him, but dim with some far-off vision. As he marked the look in them, and thought of what they must be remembering and aching for, his heart began to smite him. He felt his first pang of self-reproach, for having doomed to ignominious exile and imprisonment this splendid creature who had deserved, at least, to die free. As he mused over this point, half angrily, the Grey Master suddenly paused, and his thin nostrils wrinkled. Perhaps there still clung about Kane's clothes some scent of the spruce woods, some pungent breath of the cedar swamps. He turned and looked Kane straight in the eyes.

There was unmistakable recognition in that deep stare. There was also, to Kane's sensitive imagination, a tameless hate and an unspeakable but dauntless despair. Convicted in his own mind of a gross and merciless misunderstanding of his wild kindreds, whom he professed to know so well, he glanced up and saw the painted placard staring down at him, exactly as he had anticipated—

CANIS OCCIDENTALIS.

EASTERN NORTH AMERICA.

PRESENTED BY ARTHUR KANE, ESQ.

The sight sickened him. He had a foolish impulse to tear it down and to abase himself with a plea for pardon before the silent beast behind the bars. But when he looked again, the Grey Master had turned away, and was once more, with indrawn, far-off vision in his eyes, pacing, pacing, pacing to and fro. Kane felt overwhelmed with the intolerable weariness of it, as if it had been going on, just like that, ever since he had pronounced this doom upon his vanquished adversary, and as if it would go on like that for ever. In vain by coaxing word, by sharp, sudden whistle, by imitations of owl, loon, and deer

calls, which brought all the boys in the place admiringly about him, did he strive to catch again the attention of the captive. But not once more, even for the fleeting fraction of a second, would the Grey Master turn his eyes. And presently, angry and self-reproachful, Kane turned on his heel and went home, pursued by the enthusiasm of the small boys.

After this, Kane went nearly every day to the little "Zoo"; but never again did he win the smallest hint of notice from the Grey Master. And ever that tireless pacing smote him with bitterest self-reproach. Half unconsciously, he made it a sort of penance, to go and watch his victim, till at last he found himself indulging in sentimental, idiotic notions of trying to ransom the prisoner. Realising that any such attempt would make him supremely ridiculous, and that such a dangerous and powerful creature could not be set free anywhere, he consoled himself with a resolve that never again would he take captive any of the freedom-loving, tameless kindreds of the wilderness. He would kill them and have cleanly done with it, or leave them alone.

One morning, thinking to break the spell of that eternal, hopeless pacing by catching the Grey Master at his meals, Kane went up to the gardens very early, before any of the usual visitors had arrived. He found that the animals had already been fed. The cages were being cleaned. He congratulated himself on his opportune arrival, for this would give him a new insight into the ways of the beasts with their keepers.

The head-keeper, as it chanced, was a man of long experience with wild animals, in one of the chief zoological parks of the country. Long familiarity, however, had given him that most dangerous gift, contempt. And he had lost his position through that fault most unforgivable in an animal keeper, drunkenness. Owing to this fact, the inexperienced authorities of this little "Zoo" had been able to obtain his services at a comparatively moderate wage—and were congratulating themselves on the possession of a treasure.

On this particular morning, Biddell was not by any means himself. He was cleaning the cage of the two pumas, and making at the same time desperate efforts to keep his faculties clear and avoid betraying his condition. The two big cats seemed to observe nothing peculiar in his manner, and obeyed him, sulkily, as usual; but Kane noticed that the great wolf, though pacing up and down according to his custom, had his eyes on the man in the next cage, instead of upon his own secret visions. Biddell had driven the two pumas back through the door which led from the open cage to the room which served them for a den, and closed the door on them. Then, having finished his duties there, he unfastened the strong door between this cage and that of the Grey Master, and stepped through, leaving the door slightly ajar.

Biddell was armed, of course, with a heavy-pronged fork, but he carried it carelessly as he went about his work, as if he had long since taught the sombre wolf to keep at a distance. But to-day the wolf acted curiously. He backed away in silence, as usual, but eyed the man fixedly with a look which, as it seemed to Kane, showed anything rather than fear. The stiff hair rose slightly along his neck and massive shoulders. Kane could not help congratulating himself that he was not in the keeper's place. But he felt sure everything was all right, as Biddell was supposed to know his business.

When Biddell came to the place where the wolf was standing, the latter made way reluctantly, still backing, and staring with that sinister fixity which Kane found so impressive. He wondered if Biddell noticed. He was just on the point of speaking to him about it, through the bars, when he chanced to glance aside to the cage of the pumas. Biddell, in his foggy state of mind, had forgotten to close an inner door connecting the two rooms in the rear. The pumas had quietly passed through, and emerged again into their cage by the further entrance. Catching sight of the door into the wolf's cage standing ajar, they had crept up to it; and now, with one great noiseless paw, the leader of the two was softly pushing it open.

Kane gave an inarticulate yell of warning. No words were needed to translate that warning to the keeper, who was sobered completely as he flashed round and saw what was happening. With a sharp command he rushed to drive the pumas back and close the gate. But one was already through, and the other blocked the way.

At this tense instant, while Kane glanced swiftly aside to see if any help were in sight, the Grey Master launched himself across the cage. Kane could not see distinctly, so swiftly did it happen, whether the man or the intruding puma was the object of that mad rush. But in the next second the man was down, on his face, with the silent wolf

and the screeching puma locked in a death grapple on top of him.

Horrified, and yelling for help, Kane tore at the bars, but there was no way of getting in, the door being locked. He saw that the wolf had secured a hold upon the puma's throat, but that the great cat's claws were doing deadly work. Then the second puma pounced, with a screech, upon the Grey Master's back, bearing him down.

At this moment Biddell rolled out from under the raving, writhing heap, and staggered to his feet, bleeding, but apparently uninjured. With his fork and his booted foot he threw himself upon the combatants furiously, striving to separate them. After what seemed to Kane an age he succeeded in forcing off the second puma and driving it through the gate, which he shut. Then he returned to the fight.

But he had little more to do now, for the fight was over. Though no wolf is supposed to be a fair match for a puma, the Grey Master, with his enormous strength and subtle craft, might perhaps have held his own against his first antagonist alone. But against the two he was powerless. The puma, badly torn, now crouched snarling upon his unresisting body. Biddell forced the victor off and drove him into a corner, where he lay lashing his sides with heavy, twitching tail.

The keeper was sober enough now. One long look at the great wolf's body satisfied him it was all over. He turned and saw Kane's white face pressed against the bars. With a short laugh he shook himself, to make sure he was all sound, then pushed the body of the Grey Master gently with his foot. Yet there was respect, not disrespect, in the gesture.

"I wouldn't have had that happen for a thousand dollars, Mr. Kane!" said he in a voice of keen regret. "That was a great beast, an' we'll never get another wolf to match him."

Kane was on the point of saying that it would *not* have happened but for certain circumstances which it was unnecessary for him to specify. He realised, however, that he was glad it had happened, glad the long pacing, pacing, pacing was at an end, glad the load of his self-reproach was lifted off. So he said something quite different.

"Well, Biddell, he's *free!* And maybe, when all's said, that was just what he was after!"

Then he turned and strode hurriedly away, more content in his heart than he had felt for days.

"THE BIRDS GO NORTH AGAIN."

THEY leave us, when the Summer glory dies;
When Autumn's touch is on the golden trees
They pass away from us across the seas,
To lands of sunshine, and to radiant skies.

But, when our leaves and blossoms are unfurled,
In all the opening tenderness of Spring
That gives new life, new joy to everything,
They come to us again, across the world.

They come to us—to love, to woo, to nest!
They leave us when their nesting time is done.
In far-off southern land they seek the sun;
For love and home—they know the North is best!

Camping Out.

By CHARLES D. LESLIE.

CIVILISATION is a greatly over-rated institution. We may sleep softer and fare more sumptuously than our forefathers, but the wandering Arab, who each day moves his tent, and so daily shifts his peripatetic domicile, is the man to be envied. Just think: he never knows a modern villa, nor sees a plumber's bill, nor rests in his Sunday suit on a newly painted sill. This is poetry, but it is also—what poetry rarely is—truth. Instead of living in a house and paying rates and taxes, he lives in a tent.

The joys of camp life have only to be experienced to be realised. I state this positively, for I have done it—for one night only, I confess, circumstances over which I have no control denying me further experiences of its simple joys until such time as I am permitted to hoist my canvas home in Hyde Park. I am now in correspondence with the authorities on the subject. Specially do I remember on that never-to-be-forgotten occasion the superiority in tent life over the method of calling one in the morning practised in the ordinary home. The usual *modus operandi* is tryingly familiar. A maid knocks at the door: "Half past eight, sir, and here's your hot water," she says. With what result? You either go to sleep again or lie awake wondering whether to get up or not. Of course, you rise ultimately, only to find the coffee cold and the bacon congealing in its dish. Now, when I slept in tent, it wasn't a bit like that.



"The man who had kicked me in the eye in the excitement of getting up declined to apologise."

There were two tents, and the other fellows were up first, and they came to call us—dear, good fellows that they were—in order that we might not miss the beauties of the awakening day and the sight of the early worms wriggling with joy in the beaks of the roving blackbirds. "We are the rewards of virtue," they were saying as eloquently as worms can speak. Well, one of our friends got hold of our "guy" rope—so called, as was subsequently explained, because it made guys of us—and pulled it. And then was seen, so I was informed later, a strange and moving sight. The tent moved, not laterally, like the wood in "Macbeth," but downwardly like a falling star; speaking technically, the vertex tried to approach as near the base as circumstances—that is to say, the sleepers it descended upon—permitted.

The advantages of this method of calling are manifest. The sleeper is bound to get up. He never gives himself "another five minutes." We all rose simultaneously. We were outside that tent in a singularly short time, as wide awake as ever we were in our lives. Perhaps we were not feeling exactly jocund, but, then, who is, when called at five in the morning? Truth to tell, the callers having unobtrusively retired, we snarled at each other. The man who had kicked me in the eye in the excitement of getting up declined to apologise, alleging that another man's foot was resting on his nose at the time; while the third man, the owner of the foot, was cross with me; he said I had grabbed him by the hair so violently that I had loosened the whole of his scalp. He took my explanation, that it was purely an accident, in bad part. From the way he went on, you would have thought I'd been trying to steal his hair (which was the colour of carrots), but when I playfully said I was not a donkey, he replied it was a matter of

opinion. (Brilliancy of repartee can hardly be expected at five in the morning.) Still, though the mode of calling is open to criticism, it is at least effective, and in an age when we worship efficiency (on paper, at least) that counts.

Again, in camp life one never has to dress in a hurry for fear the eggs will be cold before one's tie is fixed to satisfaction point. The breakfast has to be cooked before it is eaten—it usually is, but I mean you have to do it yourself, and you can't prepare it before you get up. At least you get it hot when you do get it, but frankly I confess a decent restaurant within a stone's throw of the tent greatly improves camp life. Of course, and don't. My knowledge of cookery has been the curse of my life. Listen to my tale of woe. When I was at Cambridge, I decided to travel in strange lands as soon as I had taken my degree. Therefore I took some cookery lessons. Thus equipped for the battle of life, I left this country for the Klondyke, then the goal of all young adventurers. I reached the goldfields and joined myself to a party. We prospected, found gold, staked claims, and worked them—at least, they did. I cooked instead. I cleaned saucepans, and fried steaks, and washed dirty plates. Repeatedly I resigned my position, but I was the only man in the party with the smallest knowledge of the culinary art, and

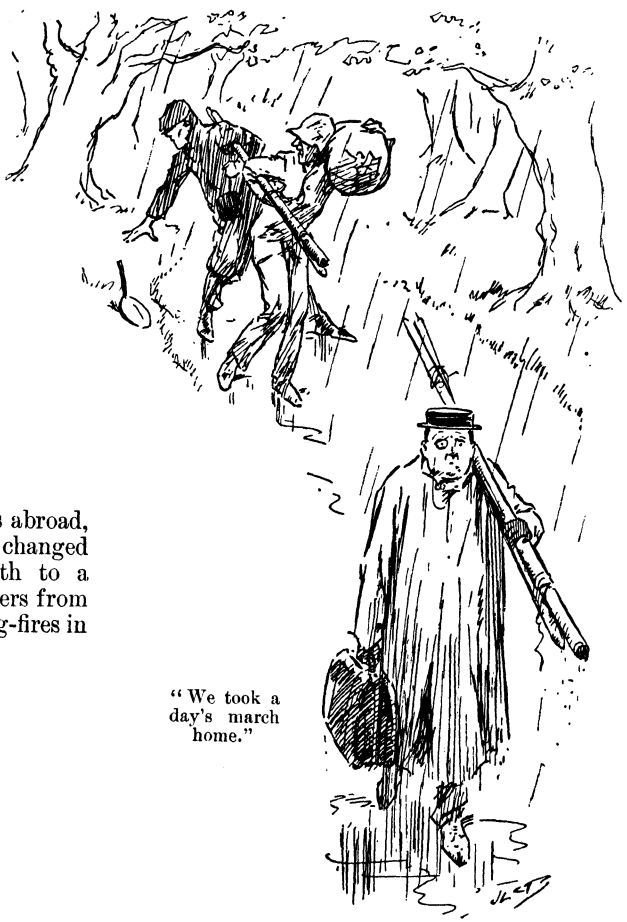


"They pitched my achievements at me."

Longfellow's Arab didn't have it, but then he, presumably, lived in Arabia and breakfasted off dates, perhaps dined off them too. I write somewhat feelingly on this subject, because on the occasion previously referred to I was cook. Now, I think an amateur cook who partakes of his own dishes (as I did) thereby gives evidence of his *bona fides*, and any criticisms on his handiwork should be pitched in a sympathetic key, "instead of which" they pitched my achievements at me.

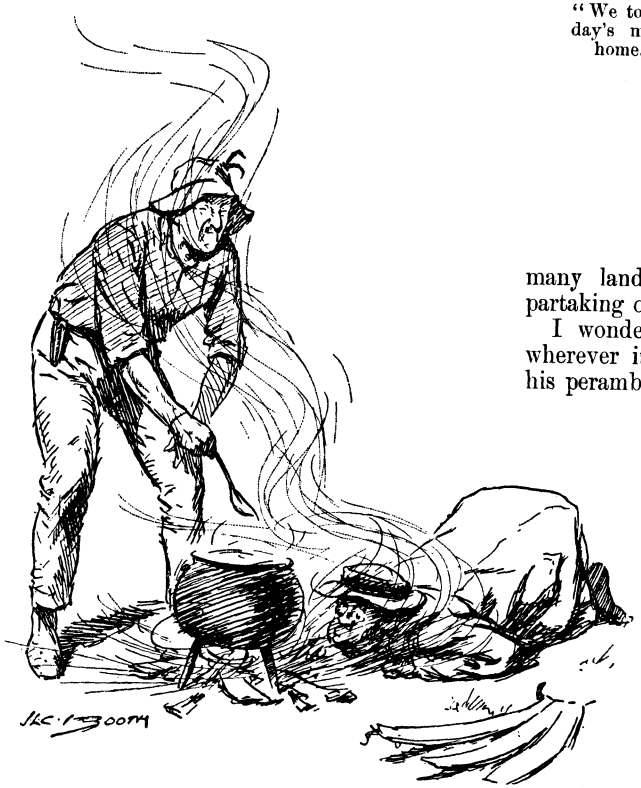
At this point I will relate a pathetic history which one of the party confided to me. I happened to tell him I thought I would take lessons in cookery, in case I was ever in a position again when the rudiments of the art would be, to put it mildly, useful. "My dear fellow," he said, "take my advice my resignation was never accepted. Wearying of my billet, I threw it up and came home. The South African war broke out. I sailed for the Cape and enlisted in the first troop of Mounted Volunteers formed. I've fought all over South Africa, or, to speak more accurately, cooked. Again I was made cook. I faced fire every day, but never won the Victoria Cross. While my comrades were fighting, I was watching Kaffirs peel potatoes, or boiling water for coffee; I was always greasy and dirty. I suffered all the discomforts of war and enjoyed none of its romance. I had three years of it. The fame of my cooking spread, and though I changed my troop more than once, I never changed my occupation. At last I resigned and sailed for Australia, determining to

become a squatter. As a preliminary I became a stock-rider on a big ranch. Two days later the cook died suddenly, and a week of his substitute nearly killed us, strong men though we were. Fate had spoken, again I took up my cross. Not for me the joys of 'rounding up' and of long rides over the grassy plains. Instead I watched boiling pots and fried steaks. Man, all I know of Australia is that it's hot, and of Klondyke that it's cold, and of South Africa that it's both dry and rainy. Of mining, fighting, stock-riding, I have no practical knowledge, but I know what miners, soldiers, and stock-riders eat, and how to prepare it. I tell you, my five years abroad, and possibly my own cooking, have changed me from a bright, optimistic youth to a prematurely aged pessimist who suffers from weak sight through watching cooking-fires in many lands, and weak digestion through partaking of his own dishes."



"We took a day's march home."

I wonder if it ever rains in Arabia, or wherever it is that the poet's Arab locates his perambulating shanty? It was because it began to rain that we decided to break up the camp—that and a certain unpleasantness owing to my cooking. The man who sold us the tent, who was evidently a humorist, said it was waterproof. Half an hour's rain converted the ground it stood on into the finest pond the heart of duck could desire. But we were not amphibious, so we took a day's march home, and have stayed there ever since. Nevertheless I am prepared (on paper) to uphold the camp life against all critics.



"I suffered all the discomforts of war and enjoyed none of its romance."

A MUTINY IN THE CORPS D'ÉLITE.

BY ELLEN ADA SMITH.

THEY were certainly a Corps d'Élite; no ladies' orchestra in London could touch them for perfection as a whole, because every unit had the soul of an artist, without which the most talented execution falls so far short of the ideal. If all the other instruments had stopped, leaving only one to carry on the burden of the score, that one would have been found doing its duty faithfully, taking due heed of every delicate change and inflection. But then the culling of these choice executants from over a thousand pupils of the Universal School of Music had been done with amazing skill—with great intuition by their master and conductor, Paul Faraday; but as perfection is always so difficult even to aim at, the entrance to this Corps was almost as narrow as the strait way; if glory lay beyond the gate, angry tears, deep disappointment, repeated rejections were the portion of the many who clamoured in vain for an entrance.

The ambitious and incompetent had futile rages against the implacable Faraday, who would have refused a duchess if he had thought her phrasing faulty. As a matter of fact, his incomparable few were not duchesses, but, like himself, young, eager, enthusiastic, and poor. They were all workers together, but as it is no easy task to drive, or even lead, thoroughbreds, so it was no easy task for this irritable musician, with his moods, his imperiousness, his sharp, sarcastic speech, to properly officer this eager convoy pressing enthusiastically towards perfection. A vague rumour of terrible scenes in the practice-room would float in the academic atmosphere, but the Corps, being loyal to itself and its head, seldom told tales out of school.

Yet it was perfectly true about the stormy scenes, for on these nervous occasions Faraday's nationality on his mother's side would assert itself. She had been a Viennese, musical to her finger-tips, and a singer of repute, but bearing the handicap of the artistic temperament which so wars against serenity of temper and utterly refuses to suffer fools gladly. Now, Faraday had no fools under his command, but he had the same temperaments to deal with as his own, and they often so reacted upon each other, and language became so hasty and ill-judged, that it was difficult for any outsider to see how the Corps held together at all—difficult to see why it was not entirely dissipated and rent asunder by the force and fieriness of its elemental nature.

But Faraday had another side to his character—the dower of a calm English father—and this helped him to deal with the fiery young spirits who would have been impatient of weakness. Moreover, he was a born leader in so much that while studying his Corps collectively, he studied it also individually; he knew the temper and capabilities of each unit, and could control the one and stimulate the other most tactfully when he happened to be in full command of himself, which was so rarely the case at rehearsal.

It was when he led his Corps in public—through sometimes most difficult achievements—that the loyalty of the executants to their leader, and his to them, became so triumphantly apparent and made success assured.

He invariably upheld them when they were nervous—as all true artists cannot fail to be at times—by a calm, unruffled demeanour which entirely blotted out the word "failure" from the dictionary of life. He knew their moods—recognised them instantly in the moment of facing his trained forces and taking *bâton* in hand; he could read those tremulous faces like open books, and the quick inspiration of the moment would teach him how to disperse their fears like summer mists. This faculty of courage at the right moment makes the born leader of men and women, and although some of Paul Faraday's pupils almost hated him at times, they never hated him at those crucial moments when they depended fearlessly upon his leadership.

But it appeared one day as if this state of

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"An angry storm leaving turbulent waves and a wreck-strewn scene."

things were not to last for ever. There had been a long and important rehearsal of Faraday's own work—an ambitious production with which to tempt criticism for the first time. He might have had it produced by the whole strength of the college orchestra, but he had preferred to give it to the delicate, highly trained machine which he had perfected with his own hands.

Now, to leader and orchestra alike this new venture was very different from their ordinary work; it was a far more nervous undertaking than the practising of familiar works by famous masters, and the strain was felt by all concerned.

The rehearsal—and it was the last—had gone badly from the beginning to the end. Paul Faraday had started by being irritable, sarcastic, and most exacting; the more the orchestra strove to fulfil his drastic requirements, the more they fell short of artistic perfection; hope seemed to have deserted that strenuous rehearsal, and when it was over, Paul Faraday departed like an angry storm leaving turbulent waves and a wreck-strewn scene. Never before had the members of a ladies' orchestra been so pelted with hot, stinging words, or so worn by the fretting impatience of an impossible task-master. Left to recover themselves by the tempestuous exit, these wrecks were pitiful to see; there were exasperated tears on flaming cheeks, eyes bright with indignation, and a general discomfort of twanging nerves which is insufferable even by itself. But it soon appeared that the ladies were at least as angry with themselves as with Paul Faraday—nay, if speech had any meaning, they were far more vexed with their own inadequacy than his unbearable manner of trying to force efficiency upon them.

Vera Fredolin, the first violin, and always the master spirit in Faraday's absence, broke the heavy silence. We all know Vera Fredolin now, with her beauty and her gift, but I am writing of some years ago, when she was only the first violin.

"We cannot do it; the thing is impossible; six rehearsals are needed, and we have had but two. Girls, we shall spoil it!"

A wave of depressed assent rippled over the dishevelled assembly, and the first 'cello spoke softly, and all her grieved soul was in her face.

"And if we spoil it—his beautiful work—we may blight his career as a composer. And if we mar this chance of his——"

"Such a thing will not bear thinking of!"

cried the harpist, and she struck the strings so that they wailed.

"But we may think about it in order to avoid it," observed a quiet, pathetic little voice from behind the shadow of an imposing bass viol, the neck curled darkly over her head like the cowl of a monk. "Let us remember that although he orders and scolds us as though he were a prince and we slaves, he is just struggling like the rest of us."

They were all more or less subdued by sheer exhaustion, just in that depressed humour which can foresee nothing but defeat, and defeat was the one thing they dared not face, out of utter loyalty to the man for whose ability they had one and all such intense admiration. So highly strung were all these earnest, enthusiastic young souls that they felt Paul Faraday's musical career lay that day entirely in their hands, to be made or marred. They thought the first entirely beyond their powers, and the last, as the harpist had truly said, would not bear thinking about. It was Vera Fredolin who voiced a desperate resolve.

"We will decline to perform his symphony," she said firmly. "We have been under-rehearsed, and in his own interests we will decline—firmly."

So might the gallant leader of a forlorn hope have announced his determination to do or die. It was a great moment of tension as she looked round to see if they were all on her side; she could see no mutiny against her decision, but some were too agitated to speak.

"But if we give him our real reason," said the second 'cello, who had great intuition, "he will simply *make* us do it; he will not leave us an opposition leg to stand upon. You know his way."

Probably they all knew it very well, but panic was abroad amongst those nervous thoroughbreds, and they hesitated at nothing.

"We will not give our real reason an important place; it shall come second to our indignation at the treatment we have received from him this morning. I take it we are all extremely offended."

With a visible effort they endeavoured to make the waning fires of indignation glow red again.

"Of course we are—but who's to tell him so?"

It was the bass viol player again, who looked pale and diaphanous enough to have translated the music of the spheres, but it was Vera Fredolin's courage as well as her talent which had made her the leader of the orchestra; she was not one to stand back and let others go before her into danger.

"I will tell him," she said; "but I shall take the first 'cello with me, because a deputation must be more than one, and the first 'cello can be as obstinate as a little pig, for all her soft voice. I think I'll have the harpist, too, for she represents the whole of her department and has the most imposing appearance of us all. Come, girls; he is in his room and, I think, alone."

Without giving them time to falter or hang back, she headed her unwilling convoy through a short gallery where every sort of instrument, vocal and mechanical, appeared to mingle inharmoniously, and knocked at Paul Faraday's door. Bidden to enter, they did so, Vera with her head held high and the others well behind her.

Evidently the stormy rehearsal had exhausted its director; their first view showed him worried and depressed—so much so that in answer to his irritable start of surprise and inquiry, Vera Fredolin forgot how she had intended to begin. Having attended a missionary meeting the evening before, she grasped at a straw of recollection.

"We are come," she announced hastily, "as a deputation from the parent society——" His expressive face was so quick of change that she saw amused scorn at her clumsy beginning, and pulled herself up sharply. "We are come to tell you that we decline performing your symphony in public this evening."

The blow was utterly unexpected; they could all see that. For a few moments he was entirely at a loss, and then the irritable sarcasm which had played about them like forked lightning during the rehearsal began again for their discomfort. His very manner of setting three chairs in a row, as though they were naughty schoolgirls, admonished them that if he succeeded in making them sit down in the indicated positions, they would be crushed and vanquished. They declined this ambuscade, but the chair-backs were useful as props to the physically faint.

"Indeed, ladies! And your reasons for this childish display of—what would you like me to call it?"

His contemptuous glance swept the pale faces until two of them blenched, but not Vera Fredolin's; therefore he kept his eyes on her.

"Is this play-acting in recess, or what is it? Have you any serious reason for refusing to play my symphony?"

"We have more than one serious reason,



"The young, earnest voice rang clearly and with truth."

We are inadequately prepared, but that is not our real reason for refusing. We desire to mark our sense, our deep sense, of the intemperateness of your language towards us at rehearsal this morning!"

"The intemperance of your language!" murmured the first 'cello, white to the lips.

"Your language!" breathed the harpist, whose imposing presence could not conceal a very faint heart.

He laughed—the kind of laugh which quenches all mirth in the hearers.

"We will take one grievance at a time. Granted that for urgent private reasons I have had to hurry through rehearsing. Raw ignoramuses might cavil at this, but you are trained musicians; what good are you as such if you cannot for once rise to an occasion like this? As for my language, as you call it, I believe I made some vague reference to imbeciles, but what does that amount to?"

"To our being gravely offended. You did not vaguely refer to imbeciles; you hurled the word at us, and you looked as though you would have liked to belabour every one of us with your *bâton*."

"Let us keep to facts. I cannot help the misfortune of my looks, and is it possible you cannot see how ignorant—how crassly stupid—you all were this morning? All your wits seemed to have deserted you."

"The music is very difficult."

"Granted. We neither write nor perform comic opera here. So you mean to punish me for my ill manners. What about the

audience who come specially to criticise my work?"

"They will come again when it is more worthy of their criticism."

"I see. You have arranged it all. And how shall we properly fill up our variety programme? You shall do the Toy Symphony, and I will conduct in cap and bells. Ladies, do you realise that such a piece of mean retaliation would not be possible from an orchestra composed of male members?"

It was the bitterest thing he had said, and even Vera quailed; she turned fiercely to her convoy and demanded of them why they supported her so ill. Now, Faraday had been studying them closely all the while to good purpose; he saw the panic; he went nearly to the hidden root of action, and he became the cool, efficient officer who meant to attack the position and carry it. Voice and manner all changed under the stimulus of danger. He made a gesture which dismissed all sarcasm and he spoke to the point.

"There is no need for the others to speak; I know the leader of my orchestra well, and I recognise that where she leads the others will follow obediently. I am prepared to admit that possibly I owe the members of my orchestra an apology for impatient words, but I cannot apologise while there is insubordination amongst them. When our programme for this evening has been successfully carried through—as it will be, and must be—I will make all possible amends for anything I have said amiss."

"When the apology is offered, we will consider it," said Freda—and he was not more amazed at her hardihood than she herself. "We are prepared to meet you in every reasonable way, but we shall not play the symphony."

It is a scaring thing when two apparently indomitable forces oppose each other; the convoy quaked, fearing they knew not what. The principals watched each other steadily, but Faraday's happened to be the more mobile force; he made a skilful turning movement whilst appearing to yield to circumstances.

"Let it stand so if you prefer; I only make one stipulation. The scores of my symphony shall be on your music-rests, in case you change your minds and volunteer to play it—not that I shall ask you to do so."

When he spoke in that tone, he invariably meant what he said; the spokeswoman conceded the minor point of the scores being upon the music-rests, but she intimated plainly that the Corps could not possibly reconsider its verdict.

He bowed assentingly and opened the door in a marked way.

"It will be my duty to acquaint the directorate with this disobedience—that is, if you persist in it."

Now, they all thought that this speech was hardly worthy of Paul Faraday, for hitherto they had always settled internecine war amongst themselves, without any appeal to outsiders.

"Is not that a little mean?" asked Freda simply. "We have had disagreements before, but we have always stood by each other."

He separated himself from them; it was the most cutting thing he had ever done.

"There is strength in numbers; I have the misfortune to stand alone. Good morning."

With the door so generously flung wide open to let them go, they had no excuse for lingering—no wish to linger—and they returned crushed with victory, to acclaim it in sorry triumph.

"We have saved his reputation as a composer," cried Vera Fredolin, "saved it at the expense of our own, for he thinks us mean—cowardly! He said so."

To the trembling consternation of the whole Corps, she burst into tears. Now, Vera Fredolin very seldom cried, even when she was hurt.

* * * * *

The small concert-room was well filled—not with a fashionable audience, but with alert musical spirits, keenly critical and jealous. Many were personal friends of Paul Faraday's; some were there simply as just judges to give honour where it was due and withhold it if true worth were lacking. It was a representative audience of the musical world, and the Corps d'Élite might well have hesitated at any rash attempt before such trained listeners. Had they not chosen that discretion which is said to be the better part of valour?—and yet a more miserable-looking orchestra never yet faced an audience. Palely depressed, each member sat silently waiting; there were no girlish roses to be seen amongst them, even when Paul Faraday took his place and bowed to them with even more than usual of kindly encouragement.

That quick, kindly smile of his, seen only of them, descended upon the shamed heads like the proverbial coals of fire; it was the very last thing they had expected to receive from an indignant composer whose work they had stubbornly refused to perform.

True as it was that only loyalty had inspired them for so hard a task, they could but regard themselves from his point of view, and to find him so absolutely unaltered was an added discomfort, for they could not understand it.

But, as he had told them, they were trained musicians—not mere amateurs—so at his signal they commenced to work, and did it well. Possibly keen self-reproach for apparent unkindness made them do even better than usual, but as they approached that part of the programme which their mutiny was to render a blank, they looked and felt more and more unhappy.



"'I feel most surely that I shall come back to the work I love—and to you.'"

But Paul Faraday had never seemed more himself—had certainly never conducted them more ably nor controlled his forces better—only when the time came for the first public presentation of his own work, he turned round and made a short speech to the audience—a speech very full of real and earnest feeling.

"Ladies and gentlemen, as you see by the programme, I had hoped to present my first serious composition to your notice this evening; and this in spite of inadequate rehearsals. As some of you already know, I am going on a long journey, and I wanted to receive your verdict before leaving England. But my orchestra, to whom I had entrusted the work, have decided that it is not worthy of your serious attention. Each member is a musician; each member has my full confidence as a musical critic, and they are all unanimous in their opinion that the symphony I had hoped to present to you this evening is not worthy of your attention or of their skill. I had no choice, therefore——"

"Ladies and gentlemen!" It was Vera Fredolin who came forward with the rose of generous indignation showing upon the face which had been so pale. The young, earnest voice rang clearly and with truth. "Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Faraday has entirely mistaken our motives. We refused to perform his symphony because we feared spoiling a very brilliant piece of work by our own inefficiency; he did not even tell us why the time for rehearsing was so limited. But if you will pardon our shortcomings and dissociate our mistakes from the merit of his work, we will do our best."

The applause was hearty as she returned to her place, to find every score ready and every member burning to begin. Faraday had struck the right note unerringly, and enthusiasm, the choicest wine of life, made them rise faultlessly to his ideal from beginning to end. His symphony represented the

pageant of the year, beginning with the cold, quiet unison of Nature's winter sleep, which passed to spring's awakening. Surely he had done wisely to entrust that fairy music of singing birds and sunny streams let loose to the executive ability and delicate imaginings of this choicely culled orchestra, whose members were gifted with the poetry and magic of the music they loved! The summer song breathed of crowned perfection—the glory and fulfilment of promise; the gladness of harvest was in the full, joyous chords redolent of golden days of plenty, when the earth yielded her increase before flashing so brightly into an autumn which was not to preach of the sere and the yellow leaf, but rather of happy garnerings from the harvest of the year, from fruitful vineyards where the sun imprisons itself in the grape to make glad the heart of man.

Perhaps only youth could have conceived so joyous an autumn song—only youth have given it to the world with such delicious abandon; but a victory had been scored, and possibly Paul Faraday realised that he might never again be so perfectly interpreted.

A little later he told his orchestra this, with a grateful acknowledgment of their services which was as true as the man himself. Moreover, there was the pain of parting on both sides, and as he bade them a very regretful and affectionate farewell, he presented each member, save one, with a souvenir—a little silver model of the instrument she played. But for Vera Fredolin, the ringleader of the late mutiny, he had a rod—a very fairy's wand of ivory and gold; this he put into her hesitating hand.

"Ladies, when I return—as I hope to do—I want to find my orchestra intact, and not scattered to the four winds of heaven; it would be a bitter disappointment to me if such a catastrophe happened. I leave Vera Fredolin in my place until my return. She is your leader in more ways than one; she has all the necessary influence and ability—we have proved this to-day, have we not—you and she agree to this?"

They all agreed before departing sorrowfully, but he detained Vera Fredolin for a few last words, for was she not to hold an important position?

"By the way, I believe I forgot entirely to apologise!"

"The need for that has, I think, passed by."

He had expected her to look up brightly, but she was regarding the daintily expensive toy of ivory and gold thoughtfully, and it was a little unsteady in her hands. He took one of the hands very gently, for he was going away with no certainty of coming back.

"It had to be, Vera. My father was a soldier, and he taught me to be a patriot first and a musician afterwards."

She looked up then steadfastly—as one who understood.

"Yes. Art would be only a shadow without the substance of brave deeds."

He felt the courage of the trembling hand in his—felt that honour was a living force in her no less than in himself.

"Have no fear! I feel most surely that I shall come back to the work I love—and to you."

Perhaps her quiet silence told him that he could amend his last sentence, and he did so.

"I have put the first last; let me rather say: To the woman whom I love, for music has many sworn votaries, while you and I have only each other."

GOOD-BYE!

THREE things I ask of you before we part!
—One little corner for me in your heart;
One thought of me in every passing day;
One tiny prayer for me whene'er you pray.

And so—good-bye—my friend! Yet Friendship's chain
Will hold us fast until we meet again.
For over all the leagues of land and sea
My thoughts will pass to you, and yours to me.

L. G. MOBERLY.



THE NAME DESCRIPTIVE.

HE: Mrs. De Vere? Oh, which Mrs. De Vere is that? Not Mrs. De Vere *née* Carfax?
SHE: Apparently not. Mrs. De Vere *nez retroussé*, I should think.

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

AUNT ALICE died young, and left a set of the most beautiful doll chairs. Grandma sometimes showed them to her grandchildren, saying mournfully: "They belonged to your Aunt Alice, who died at the age of nine years."

In the fulness of time the grandmother passed away, but all the family felt what a sacrilege it would be to let the little chairs be played with; so they continued to be kept on a shelf, just out of reach of Jack's busy little hands.

Jack was four years old and resourceful, and he loved those little chairs. He used to stand below the shelf and ponder ways and means by which he might acquire them.

One day he came slowly downstairs at lunch time, after a period spent in adoration of the chairs, and his family noted an unusual thoughtfulness on his baby brow. Half-way down he paused, one hand on the banister.

"Mamma," he said slowly, "did granma go to heaven?"

"Yes, dear."

"An' did I tum down from heaven?"

"Certainly, my darling."

"Well," with a smile of angel sweetness, "when I was tummin' down from heaven I met granma goin' up, an' she said: 'Jack, you can play wiv dose little chairs.'"

A GLASGOW lawyer, responding to the toast "The Law" at a public dinner, brought his speech to a close with the following words: "But, alas! all the great lawgivers have gone from us—Solon is dead, Moses is dead, Confucius and Justinian are dead, and I'm nae feelin' very well myself this evening."

THE hiring of a special teacher of penmanship for the village school of Blanktown was considered by some of the more conservative patrons an unnecessary and altogether extravagant innovation. But when, in the interests of expert wrist-and-finger motion, considerable time and stationery was consumed in the practice of certain spiral flourishes to which the delighted children gave the name of "Smoke," forbearance on the part of one irate mother ceased to be a virtue, and she entered her protest in the following note to the writing-master.

"Dear Sur our taxis is hevy enuff to suport you when you tend to bisness let alone spendin your time on Frils and Furbelows so I say just you teach my boy good Audibul riting and if we want any Smoke we can lern it to him at home.

Yours respeckfuly
Mrs jane Brown."



BUSINESS SURMISES.

YOUTH (who is under the impression that he has impressed the waitress, who is looking absent-mindedly at him): A penny for your thoughts, Gertie?

WAITRESS: I was just wondering if you were a steak pudding or a boiled rabbit.

ONE morning, when the Black Maria was being driven towards Holloway, a facetious Cockney pedestrian, pretending to mistake it for an omnibus, called out to the driver—

"Any room inside?"

"Oh, yes," replied the driver, "we've kept a place for you."

"But what's the fare?" said the pedestrian.

"Same as before," retorted the driver, "bread and water, and skilly on Sundays."

THE LURE OF SPRING.

London is dusty and brown,
But I know a dim, dreamy wood,
Perched on the side of a down,
Not many miles out of town,
Where the smell of the bracken is good.

Pendent anemones peep
Shyly from sun-spattered shades,
Nightingale concerts are cheap,
Bluebells in regiments creep—
Drifts of blue smoke—through the glades.

Come, put your business away!
Let's catch the 10.23,
Spend, while the year's still at May,
One long delectable day—
None of your half days for me.

Jessie Pope.

A SCHOOL teacher, whose methods were rather more fanciful than usual, was giving her class a chatty lecture on "The Cat."

"And what is pussy clad in?" she asked. "What is it that protects her from the cold? Does she wear a pinafore or does she wear a shawl or does she wear a little jacket?"

"But, teacher!" exclaimed an unimaginative and impatient pupil, "ain't yer never *seen* a cat?"

LITTLE Freddy is fully endowed with the inquiring mind of youth. Recently he said: "Mamma, who puts the bottle of milk in our front porch every night when we are all asleep?"

"Isn't that a rather foolish question?" his mother answered. "Who do you suppose brings it to us?"

"Well," said the small investigator thoughtfully, "I *suppose* God does, but I'd like to know for certain!"

HER ANSWER.

"It doesn't matter what we *were* one bit—
"What we are now," I said, "should be our care!"
"Oh, that," she cried, "I really can't admit—
"I think it's *most* important what we *wear!*"

R. Mertun.



ALTERNATIVE TITLES.

HOSTESS: And what is your name, my dear?

LITTLE GIRL (the youngest of ten): Brown.

HOSTESS: But what do they call you at home?

LITTLE GIRL: Sometimes Maggie, and sometimes "Come here!"



A GENTLE HINT.

RECTOR'S DAUGHTER: Good-morning, Mr. Bottle. I've been wanting to see you.
MR. BOTTLE: Nothing wrong with the milk, miss, I 'ope, surely?
RECTOR'S DAUGHTER: Well, we thought perhaps you ought to know that father doesn't use it for christening.





PRINCE VON DER GÖELS.

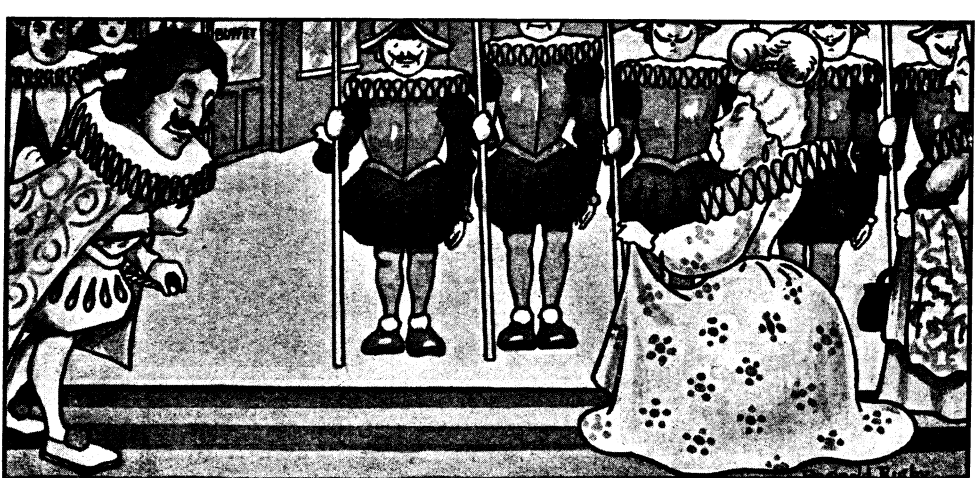
Prince von der Göels was handsome,
And anything but stupid,
And, though he liked the gentler sex,
Fought very shy of Cupid;
And all the ladies of the Court
Adored him "most emphatic,"
And tried to draw him on to make
A marriage morganatic.

They worked him slippers, fancy ties,
And knickerbocker stockings,
And several pairs of evening socks
With coronetted "clockings."
At dances each would try her best
To draw him on by flirting;
When cycling, if they followed him,
He saved himself by "spurting."

He couldn't play a round at golf
Without a charming bevy
To bear his "cleeks" and "brassies," lest
His Highness found them heavy.
They filled his pipes, they stirred his tea,
Played "bridge" with him, and croquet,
And tried to look quite pleasant if
He "logged" them at the "roqué."

He stood it for a year or two,
And then, in desperation,
Obtained the hand of Princess X——,
And met her at the station.
And when he'd married her, he wished
He'd not been in a hurry;
For now he finds he suffers from
Another kind of worry!

Reginald Rigby.

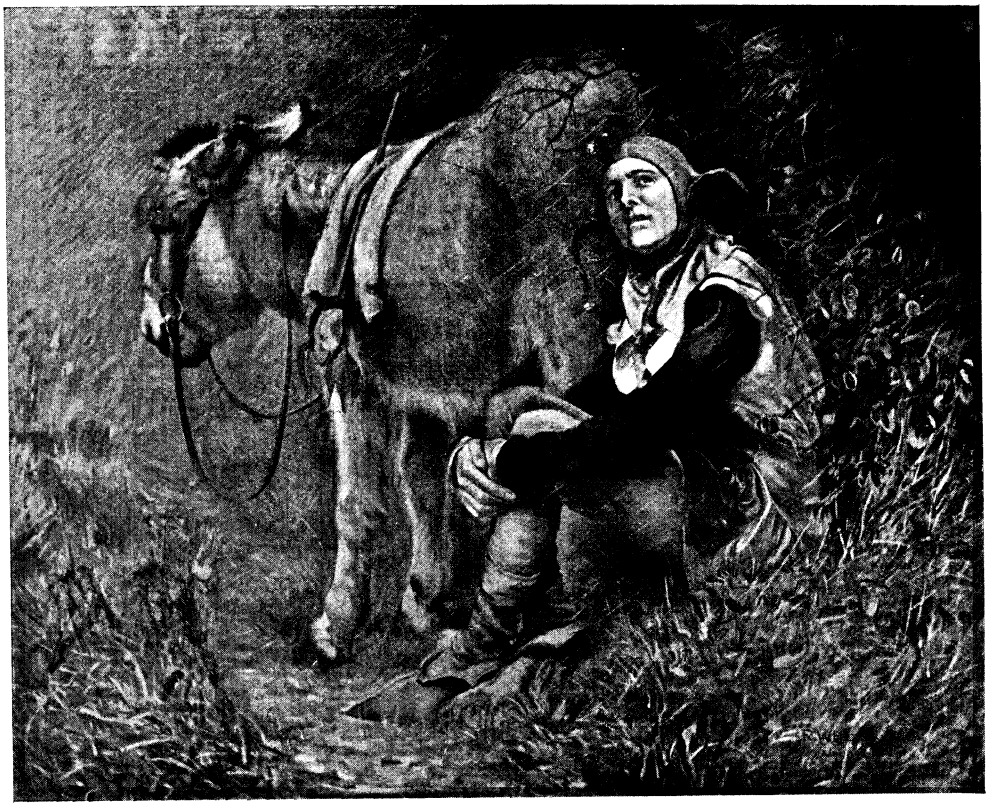


Mail



"JOAN OF ARC TAKEN PRISONER." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

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THE ART OF MR. ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

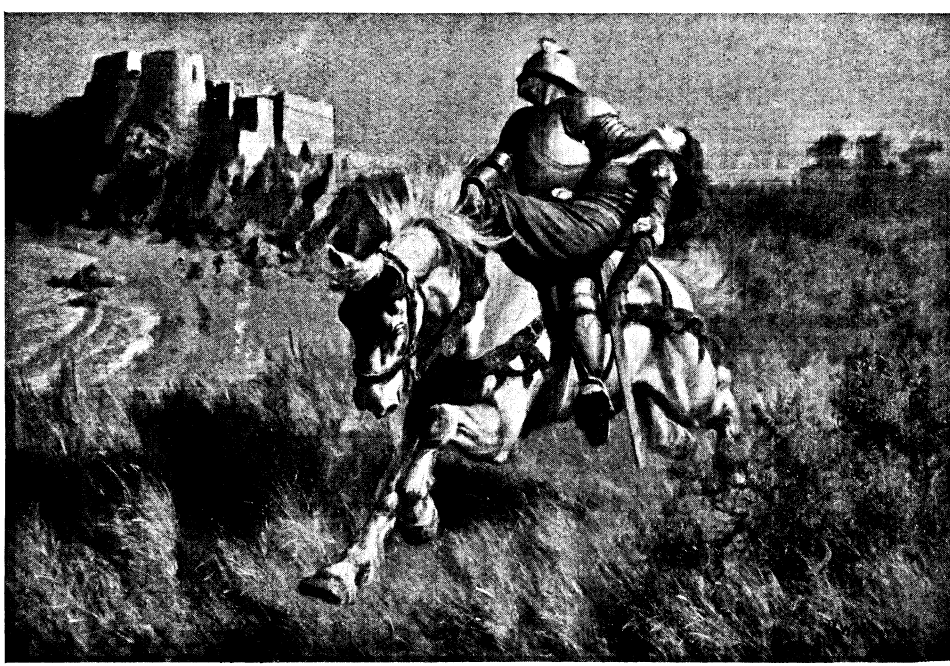
BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

IN taking so important a step as the establishment in a village of a School of Art, free of pecuniary charge to the students, and the curriculum of which was to consist of the painting from the nude living model in the daytime, drawing in charcoal or pencil from the nude model in the evening, and the painting of a head once a week, Sir Hubert von Herkomer's chief design was to suppress the wastrel art-student, and from the earnest one to help withdraw the veil of convention which ever lies between the eyes of anxious inexperience and the practice of art. Sir Hubert von Herkomer turned his perfect genius for revolt against the system of art-teaching in use in the already established schools, which was something on the trades-union principle of over-much care for average talent, which deemed essential that a stated result should be produced within a stated time, and that the student, for the sake of disciplining his mind, should be set to tasks that were unsuited to his capacity. Sir Hubert's design was to help each of his students to find his or her own personality. He had precedence for this ambition, for Courbet long before asserted that the aim of each painter should be the emancipation of this same individuality from that purely academic art which is divorced from life, so that, in a close study of Nature, the temperament of each might find expression.

A rational enough system, since the greatest

thing in the world, probably, is for a man to know that that at which he labours is his own. Sir Hubert von Herkomer holds that he has been completely successful in his endeavour to free his students from prejudicial convention, and especially from those limping aids, imitations, "crutches with which to hobble about as lame Herkomers." But in him an autocrat, a man of great vitality, strong of will, with a keen-edged intelligence, and an encyclopædic knowledge of the technique of almost every branch of lineal art, we see a man formed to create followers, and upon many a canvas issued from the Bushey School we have found ardently sought in his pupils' work has been the individual conception of how best to translate Nature into the terms of art; and undoubtedly in the difficult exercise of putting down on canvas the impression of the subject, the well-nigh hopeless attempt to clothe the sight with the medium of oil-colour, the *alla prima* is probably the only method of securing that illusive power.

Merimée, that great literary artist, was a man who never used two words if he thought one would do better, and Professor Herkomer, in much the same way, has preached the doctrine of one touch in place of two, and the very essence of his teaching lies



"RESCUED." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

echoes and after-thoughts of him. This is but our opinion, however, and it is only fair to state that it is not in accordance with the one he holds. In the book he has published, called "My School and my Gospel," Sir Hubert writes: "The result of this method of teaching has been that the world cannot recognise my pupils in their works, and it will probably be said that I have left no 'school' behind me. But I never could understand the advantage of squeezing the supple mind of a young painter into a master's manner, from which he may never wholly extricate himself."

The "quality" which the Professor has in this *alla prima*, the exercise of seeing, and putting down once and for all, the snatched tone; for, to use his own words, "no second touch in oil-colour ever equals the first on the white canvas for purity."

In the course of the twenty-one years during which Sir Hubert von Herkomer presided over the Bushey School, we find much talent to have been set in the right road.

The mint and anise and cummin of praise and the rue of blame have had their part in producing from amongst the rank and file Mr. Arnesby Brown, A.R.A., Miss Lucy Kemp Welch, R.B.A., Mr. Tom Mostyn, Mr. H. J. Ford, Mr. Borough Johnson, Mr. G.



"ENID AND GERAINT." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.
Reproduced, by permission, from the original in the collection of S. Storey, Esq.

Harcourt, Mr. William Nicholson, and Mr. Rowland Wheelwright, R.B.A., painters of disparate ambitions, but each possessed of a very real workable talent of which time has yet to test the fulness of scope.

It is probable that these, the Professor's better-known pupils, in their work resemble that of their master least, and that it is the personal qualities which, in the eyes of connoisseurs, have in each case won for them individual recognition. "It is a noteworthy fact," writes Professor von Herkomer, "that after long study from the life in a school, students will take up some other branch of art to which their taste or capacity leads them. Pupils of mine who were only taught to draw and paint the human figure have become landscapists and animal-painters." And it is as a landscape and animal painter that Mr. Rowland Wheelwright is probably destined to increase to permanence a mark he has already made. Nature to the landscape-painter offers inexhaustible choice of subject; it suggests idealism or supplies its own perfect composition when the eyes which look upon it can avoid the vulgarity of harsh realism, yet hold to a well-balanced suggestion of actuality.



"TRUST HER NOT, SHE IS FOOLING THEE!" BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

From the original in the Preston Public Gallery, reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Preston.

"Nature," wrote Whistler, "contains the elements in colour and form of all pictures, as the keyboard contains the notes of all music . . . when the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry as with a veil, and the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky, and the tall chimneys become campanili, and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens, and fairyland is before us, then the wayfarer hastens home, the working man and the cultured one, the wise man and the one of pleasure cease to understand, as they have ceased to see; and Nature, who for once has sung in tune, sings her exquisite song to the artist alone, her son and her master—her son in that he beloves her, her master in



"DON QUIXOTE AND MARITORNES AT THE INN." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

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"DON QUIXOTE CHARGING THE FLOCK OF SHEEP." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

that he knows her. To him her secrets are unfolded, to him her lessons have become gradually clear."

In "Turning the Plough," in "Evening," in "A Lord of Creation," and in "The Ploughman," Mr. Wheelwright shows himself the inheritor of a goodly share of that magical, artistic vision of which Whistler wrote. To see the ploughman "homeward plod his weary way" belongs to our experience; he is part of the fabric of life to the unimaginative, just as he is part of the fabric of romance to the artist. The office of landscape-painter, in fact, is to find the virtue, as we say of a herb, in Nature, reduce it to its elements, separate it from its unpictorial adjuncts, and place its artistic residue on canvas, and Mr. Wheelwright, after having worked from the life in the Bushey School, is one of those pupils the Professor speaks of, whose taste and capacity have withdrawn him gradually more and more each year from the domain of episodic into that of romantic art. Not that Mr. Wheelwright entirely confines himself to landscape and animal painting; he is young enough to be still greedy of discovery, and it may be some time yet before his work on the Academy walls challenges attention as a "Wheelwright" because it is but a variant of some one or other of his beloved themes. Already there are signs in his art that the grandiose in subject is giving way to simplicity, that he is painting for the sake of some one or other of the appealing aspects of Nature's mood, rather than for the extrinsic element of adventure; and this with a tenderness and fulness of expression very engaging, since it is obvious that he is alive to beauty in every form as well as sensitive to both line and colour.



"TURNING THE PLOUGH." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

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"MAZEPPA." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

Probably the most dramatic of all the pictures Mr. Wheelwright has painted has been his "Enid and Geraint," that Geraint who sat in Arthur's hall in Camelot, a subject taken from Tennyson's "Idylls of the King"; and the moment he chooses to portray is the one when the churlish warrior, doubtful of the loyalty and faith of the most patient, meek-eyed Grisel, having laid his commands upon her—

> I charge you wi' it more especially,
> What things so ever ye may hear, or see,
> Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use
> To charge you) that you speak not, but obey—

takes her, clad in her old clothes, in which she seemed to herself,

> A ragged robin from the hedge

on the maddest of adventurous quests

> To the wilds! and Enid leading down the tracks
> Through which he bade her lead him on, they past
> The marches, and by bandit-haunted holes,
> Grey swamps and pools, waste places of the heron,
> And wildernesses, perilous paths, they rode:
> Round was their pace at first, but slacken'd soon:
> A stranger meeting them had surely thought,
> They rode so slowly and they look'd so pale,
> That each had suffer'd some exceeding wrong.



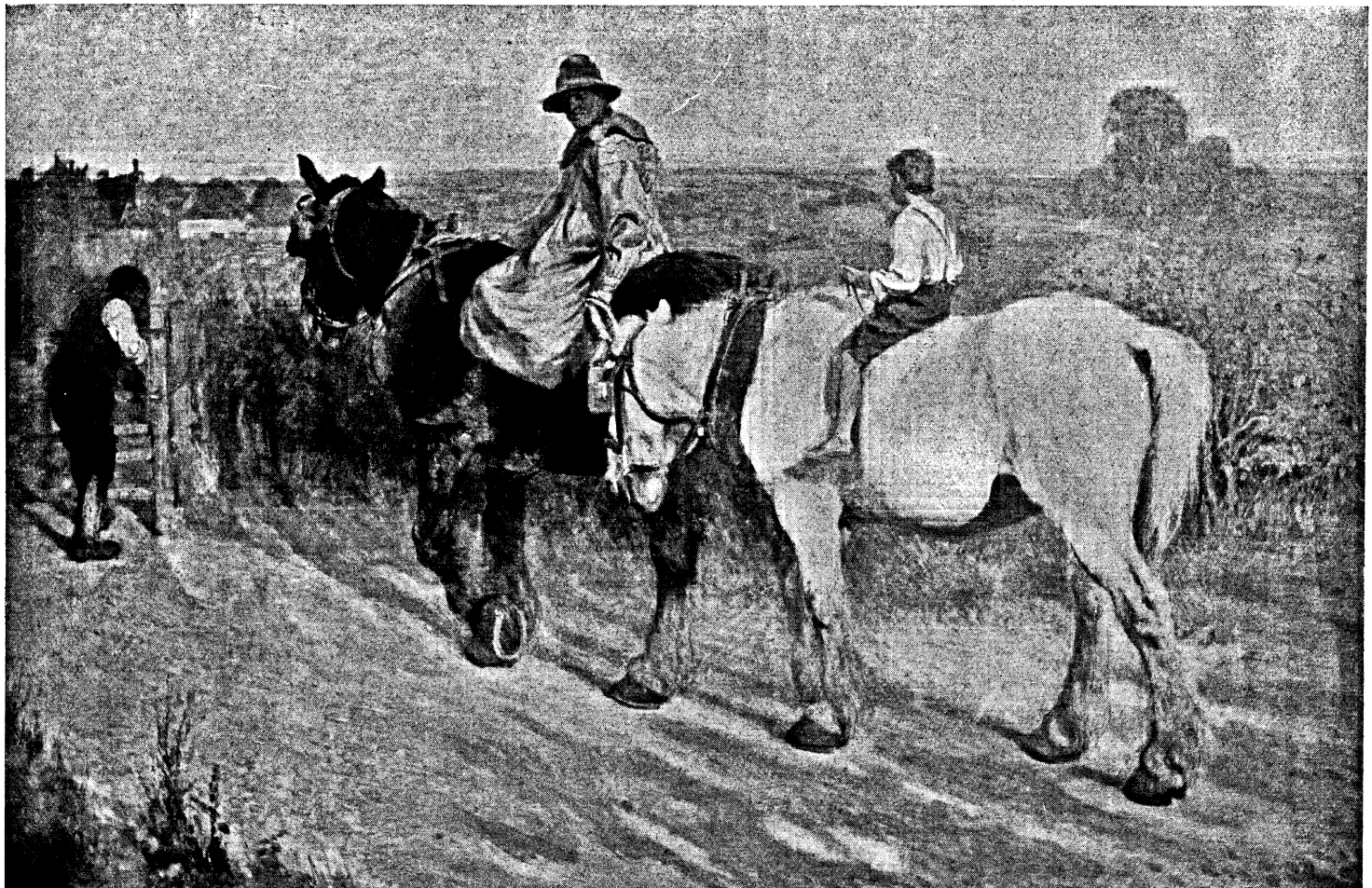
Photo by [*Brown, Barnes & Bell.*

MR. ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

It is difficult to understand that Geraint, seeing Enid so "sweet and serviceable," should have continued such austere treatment for day after day. The lines Mr. Wheelwright appends to his picture are:

> Once she look'd back, and when she saw him ride
> More near by many a rood than yester-morn,
> It well nigh made her cheerful; till Geraint
> Waving an angry hand, as who should say
> "Ye watch me," sadden'd all her heart again.

Mr. Wheelwright has fallen, as have fallen most painters, who have struck the balance of their sympathies midway between the three subjects—man, animal, and landscape—under the influence of Cervantes's great hero. His first picture representing "Don Quixote" is taken from the seventeenth chapter of the inimitable book, when Don Quixote, after discoursing with Sancho of the appurtenances of chivalry, perceives, on the road on which the two were travelling, a great and thick cloud of dust coming towards them, upon which he turns to Sancho and says: "This is the day, O Sancho, that shall manifest the good that Fortune hath in store for me. . . . Seest thou that cloud of dust, Sancho? It is raised by a prodigious army of divers and innumerable nations, who are on the march this way." "If so, there must be two armies," said Sancho; "for here, on this side, arises just such another cloud of dust." Don Quixote turned, and seeing that it really was so, he rejoiced exceedingly, taking it for granted they were two armies coming to engage in that spacious plain; for at all hours and moments his imagination was full of the battles, enchantments, adventures, extravagances, amours, and challenges detailed in his favourite books; and in every thought, word, and action he reverted to them. Now, the cloud of dust he saw was raised by two great flocks of sheep going the same road from different parts, and as the dust concealed them until they came near, and Don Quixote affirmed so positively they were armies, Sancho began to believe it, and said: 'Sir, what must we do?' 'What?' replied Don Quixote—'favour and assist the weaker side.'" After standing on one side with his henchman and calling memories of romance to his aid, during which Sancho Panza stands confounded at the discourse, trying to see with his master's eyes the knights and giants so graphically pointed out to him, Don Quixote asks: "'Hearest thou not the neighing of the steeds, the sound of the trumpets, and the rattling of the drums?' 'I hear nothing,' answered Sancho, 'but the bleatings of sheep and lambs.' 'Thy fears, Sancho,' said



"A GOLDEN EVENING." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.



"THE PLOUGHMAN." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

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Don Quixote, 'prevent thee from hearing or seeing aright.' . . . then clapping spurs to Rosinante, and setting his lance in rest, he darted down the hillock like lightning. . . . he rushed into the midst of the squadron of sheep, and began to attack them with his lance as courageously and intrepidly as if in good earnest he was attacking his mortal enemies." And it is exactly at this point of the story that Mr. Wheelwright shows us this prince of extravagant chivalry.

The second subject he takes from Don Quixote is from chapter forty-three, when the innkeeper's daughter and her maid spy on the knight as he, mounted on Rosinante, keeps guard on the inn which he supposes to be a castle, and tells over to himself the perfections of his lady, Dulcinea del Toboso, that quintessence of discretion, treasury of wit, and pledge of modesty. Called upon by the innkeeper's daughter to give one of his hands into her grasp, he, unwilling to appear discourteous and ungrateful to a lady who has become, he supposes, irresistibly enamoured of his gallant bearing, consents to offer his hand to her, through the bars of the window, "'not to be kissed, but that you may behold the contexture of its nerves, the firm knitting of its muscles, the largeness and spaciousness of its veins, whence you may infer what must be the strength of that arm which belongs to such a hand.'" The girls play the cruel trick upon him of slipping a running knot in a halter round his wrist and tying the other end of it fast to the staple of the hayloft door, and as to reach to them he had to stand on the saddle of his Rosinante, they leave him to pass the night in a position of such discomfort as to force him to conclude must be caused by enchantment.

That success to which Æschylus says men "bend the knee" has already come largely to Mr. Wheelwright. In 1896 he exhibited a picture, "Trust her not, she is fooling thee!" in which a girl from a travelling caravan tries to catch the horse which has been turned loose to browse; and this picture was bought out of the funds of the Harris Bequest and is now in the picture-gallery of the Free Library and Museum, Preston. This picture is a clever piece of brushwork, the action of the horse is finely portrayed, the colouring brilliant, and the whole subject skilfully painted.

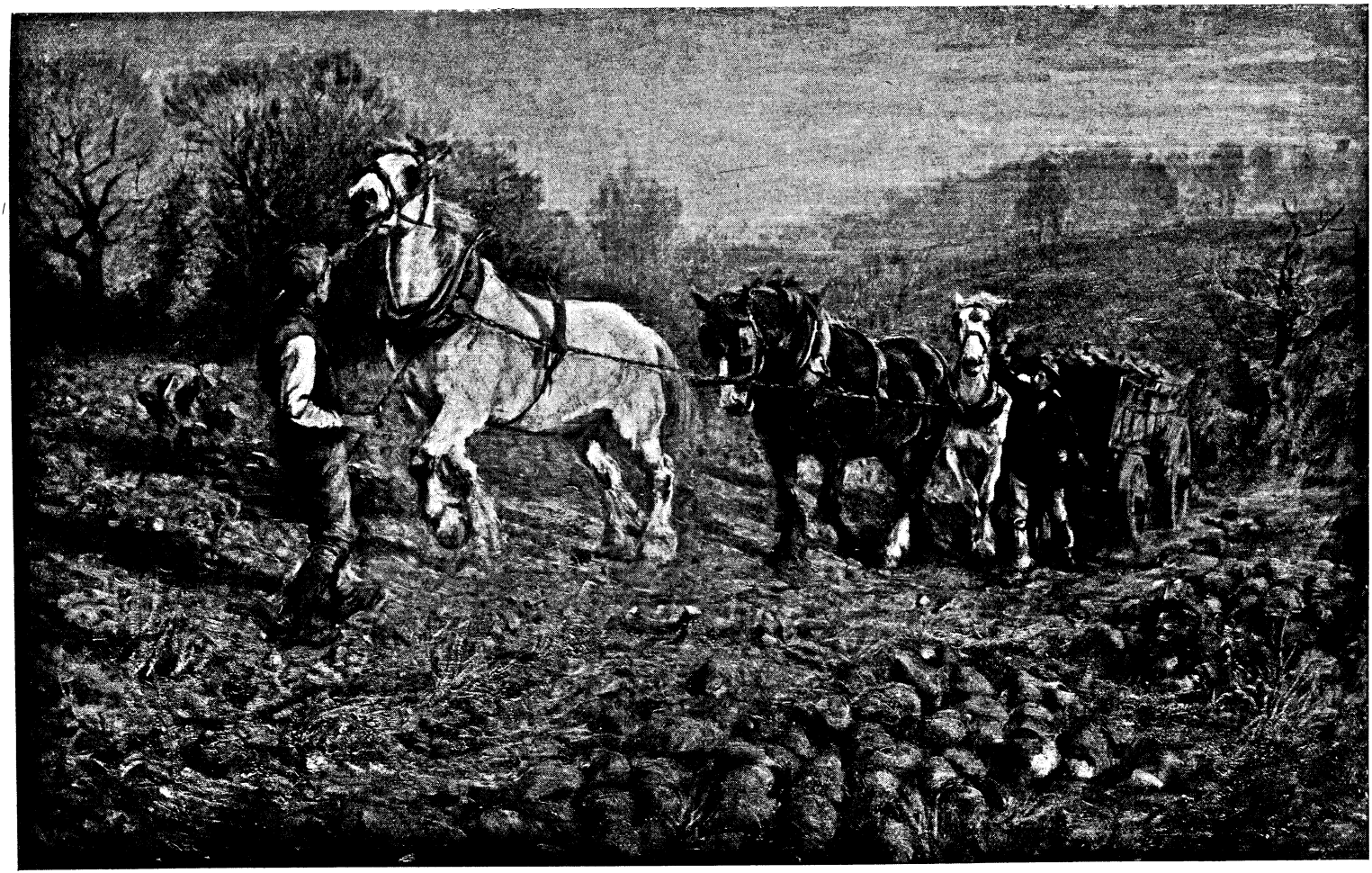
"A Lord of Creation," the subject of which is a small child riding a big cart-horse and leading another, was in the Academy of 1897; and the painter received much praise from the Press for the work he exhibited in the "Institute" the same year. One of the most ambitious of Mr. Wheelwright's pictures is his "Mazeppa," from Byron's poem of the same name—

> A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
> Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
> Came thickly thundering on,

and it illustrates the end of the fearful ride wherein Mazeppa's horse falls dead just as it reaches a herd of wild horses. We are, perhaps, not largely readers of Byron to-day, but, with the artist's power of romance, it was he who turned the somewhat sordid story of Ivan Stefanovitch Mazeppa's punishment into one of heroism. The seventeenth-century methods of revenge in the Palatinate of Padalia were not sought through the law, and it was a jealous husband who had the young Mazeppa bound on the back of an untamed horse, a hope of destruction frustrated by one of those curious freaks of Fate which turned an intended evil to the victim's benefit. The animal, on being let loose, galloped into its native wilds of the Ultraine, where its burden, half-dead, was released from his fearful position and restored to animation by some Cossacks, over whose tribe the courage and sagacity of Mazeppa afterwards won such enthusiasm that he ultimately became its chief. "The title of prince, together with high rank in the Russian Army, was later on conferred upon him by his friend and patron, Peter the Great, who long believed confidingly in his good faith, and banished or executed, as calumnious traitors, any who ventured to accuse him of conspiring with the enemies of Russia."

It would have been better for Mazeppa, however, if he had died as the martyr Byron depicts him, for after he had traitorously joined his fortunes with those of the Swedish monarch, Charles XII., his name became anathema throughout Russia; and after the battle of Puttowa, he escaped, a wretched fugitive, to Bender, there to end his own life by poison in 1709.

The year that saw the exhibition of his "Mazeppa" brought Mr. Wheelwright's "black-and-white" work to notice. He illustrated with ten vigorous drawings Longman's "Swan" edition of Shakespeare's Henry V., and we may well suppose that the study of this period of history turned his attention to Joan of Arc as a subject. He painted the capture of the Maid when, in a sortie at the siege of Compiègne in 1430, she was taken prisoner by a Picard archer,



"A WINTER HARVEST." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

From the original in the collection of Ricardo Palmer, Esq.

to be sold afterwards to John of Ligny, a vassal of the Duke of Burgundy.

But, as we have already said, the dramatic in Mr. Wheelwright's work is giving place to the poetic, in which both heart and hand are in consonance, and within the limits of which style it must be gratifying to Professor von Herkomer to trace so much of that elusive property, quality.

There is yet another variant of Mr. Wheelwright's talent—that of portraiture, and portraiture chiefly of animals. He has painted some well-known race and steeplechase horses, "The Pride of Mabistown," the property of Mr. Owen Williams, and "Whiteboy the 2nd," the property of Mr. R. Bourke, amongst others; and the pictorial sense that can join beauty to actual likeness, and character to distinguished style, finds in Mr. Wheelwright a valuable addition to the ranks of animal-painters.

Born in Australia in 1870, Mr. Wheelwright may be said to have received the whole of his art training in the pretty Hertfordshire village, for, although he for a time worked in the St. John's Wood schools, it is to Bushey he owes that admirable grounding in the several branches of art he has bent into one, and now that the Bushey School is under the guidance of Miss Kemp Welch, it is here, as this lady's adjutant, that he is helping to carry out the excellent precepts Sir Hubert von Herkomer established.

Yet gradually under their joint control the character of the teaching in the Bushey School of Painting is changing; and whilst, under the Professor, it was solely a school of figure-painting, a greater freedom of choice is now given to the student, for, in addition to the six large, well-lit studios devoted to figure-models, there is a large glasshouse where exceptional facilities are provided for the study of animals, and the bias of both Miss Kemp Welch's and Mr. Wheelwright's taste tends towards popularising this branch of art.

THE OAK AND THE IVY.

A Fable in Verse.

AN oak whom age had taught to sigh,
When his last autumn-painted leaf
Was killed by winter harsh and deaf,
Surprised the Ivy, nigh.

Her ears were sharp, her whisper soft,
Her restless climbers paid no heed,
She strangled that she might succeed,
Thought not, but questioned oft.

"And why are you thus sullen, Oak?
The leaves upon your branches seen
Fall off to show my better green,
Sigh not, but share the joke!"

The great tree said: "My life's no joke,
For every leaf that springs from me,
Shows forth my native majesty,
And knows through whom it spoke."

"But Envy works a false design;
Your leaves pretend they've grown from me.
Labour you've shirked, and flaunted free,
You would not be a vine!"

She laughed. "I knew you had the sulks!
My leaves I'm turning thus to hear
Passers, who say, without me near,
You look like other hulks."

And then she murmured, as she grew,
"When you are dead, my great green cloak,
Will make you look alive, dear Oak."
He groaned as winter blew.

And as she shook her rustling gown
In bitter irony he said:
"Perhaps you purpose to evade
The axe that cuts me down."

The oak's roots were as deep as earth;
The ivy's shallow as the snow;
Her feelings ended in a show;
His ended in a birth.

So in this fable lies a thought;
To treat no fellow as a means
To serve our ends, and build our scenes
As if his end were nought.

KENNETH BARNES.

BROOMRIDGE'S SUBSTITUTE.

A CRICKET STORY.

By K. and HESKETH PRICHARD.

THE story which I am going to tell is about one of the rummiest and at the same time most splendid things that ever happened to any fellow I ever heard of. I had better say at once that my name is James Broomridge. At Greyborough, which is the finest school in the world, and it is the school I am at, I have been longer in the Lower IV. than any other fellow. If I stay in it another term, I shall be a record, and my father says he will send me to gather in tea, or cattle, or something, in the Colonies. But this story has nothing to do with school, as it came off in our own village at the end of the Whitsun holidays, and I think you will agree that what I did then is a sort of set-off against those seven terms in the Lower IV., about which someone or other is always jawing me.

My father, as you will know if you read the *Sportsman*, is captain of the Carkhurst Village Cricket Club. He is the Squire there, and although he goes in last, I have seen him play jolly well, and he is one of those people who are more pleased when they make ten runs at cricket than they are able to be about anything else in the world. I also am like that. On reading this over, I find that what I said about my father is perhaps not quite true; for he is more pleased if Carkhurst wins a good match than he is if he makes a decent score.

I should tell you that the Carkhurst XI. is not very strong, though they might make a rattling good match with Greyborough Second XI., if they had a bit of luck, especially if Japp the postman once got going.

In our part of the country, for many miles round, everyone is frightfully keen about cricket, and most of the villages play two matches against each other as well as against Buckoak, which is the county town. Of course, the Buckoak matches are the big ones of the year, and it is considered a tremendous thing to win one.

In order that you may understand what I am going to write, I must tell you about Deighton, who is the Buckoak captain. He is a frightfully excitable chap, and cannot bear his team to be beaten; and they say when he loses a match, he has been seen to blub in the railway carriage going home. He runs the whole show at Buckoak, and as he is pretty rich, he makes it hard for anyone to beat his side, for if you are rich, you can keep professionals as well as groundmen. At Carkhurst the blacksmith rolls the cricket-ground and marks out the pitch, and we have no professional. Pugsley, who keeps a sort of grocer's shop in the village, used to be very good, and once got ten shillings from Deighton for keeping wicket in a match at Buckoak, but he is old now, and they get byes off all parts of his body. He says he is sorry he ever took that ten shillings, because of something Deighton said to him when he missed catching a man at the wicket.

The first match on our card this year was against Buckoak, and it was played early in May, which was hard on our men, because they hadn't had any practice to speak of. We had had pretty decent weather, and Patch, the blacksmith, said the wicket was good, and he didn't see how it could be made better, unless we had had marl put down on it.

I can remember that morning as well as anything. It was cold and rather cloudy, but promised to turn out finer later on. I went out soon after breakfast and crossed over to the green to have a look at the pitch, and as Japp was there, I bowled him a few, and once jolly nearly bowled him out. He said so himself.

The match was to begin at 11.30, and the air was warming up with the sun coming out, when Deighton and the Buckoak people drove up. I was the first to sight them, and I can tell you it turned me pretty sick when I saw the faces of three county professionals looking down out of the wagonette. They are all very decent chaps, especially Kilburn,

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"'Brought rather a hot lot, haven't you?'"

but fellows like that, who have played Hirst and Rhodes and bowled out Wynyard and R. E. Foster, are able to win a village match uncommonly quick.

My father and a man called Alvey, who got his flannels at Harrow and is the best of our lot, were standing behind me, and Alvey said with a laugh—

"Same old game, Colonel. Deighton's ensuring success in the usual way!"

My father muttered something under his big grey moustache about "Most unsportsmanlike of Deighton," which was rather true, as it was rather rough on us, especially as it was the first match of the season, and all cricketers know how much depends on a good start.

Deighton climbed down out of the wagonette and shook hands with my father, who said to him—

"Brought rather a hot lot, haven't you?"

I can't tell you all that Deighton said in reply, because he spent ten minutes in explaining that, as it was so early in the season, he had to scrape together any men he could get, and how it was that all three professionals had every right to play for Buckoak, and a great deal more. Especially I will not dwell on this, because what he said was rot, the sort of things a fellow does say when he has to make some silly excuse. Alvey and one or two of our side were grinning, but my father listened quite gravely, though he knew it was rot, too, because his nose kept twitching like it does when he is annoyed. Only Deighton couldn't guess that, for my father was too polite to let him see. I can tell you it is precious hard to be polite sometimes.

Then Mrs. Deighton drove up in a carriage, and my father helped her to get out, and I took her over to the tent we had put up for the ladies to sit in. She is rather pretty, and Deighton only married her since last summer. She said what a pretty ground we had—it is, you know, about the prettiest ground in England—and she told me she did hope Buckoak would win, for Mr. Deighton was so awfully keen over it; and did I think they possibly could against so strong a side as ours?

I always like to please people when I can, so I told her quite warmly I was certain Buckoak would win, as Mr. Deighton had not left us any chance, bringing all those professionals, so she could make her mind easy on that subject.

Then she wanted to know why I said that, and were the Buckoak pros. better than ours? So I had to explain to her that we hadn't any professionals and that Deighton's were county fellows. She gave such a queer sort of look, and asked me what I meant, and her cheeks grew quite pink, so I told her I heard father calling me, and went off. That evening father was angry with me, and said I should be ashamed of giving any man away like that. Now, I'd like to know what he meant. What else could I have said?

By the time Deighton and the rest of the Buckoak XI. had changed, a lot of people had come down out of the village and from the houses about, and the ladies' tent was more than half full. The people round the ropes were most of them saying that Carkhurst hadn't any chance, and telling each other stories of things they had seen the county professionals do in big matches.

The sun had come out splendidly, and there was a smell blowing across from the meadows and out of the woods which I never smell but I think of the time when I was a kid, and when I used to fish for tench in the upper pond. I never caught one, but a fellow who was once staying with us got out two, and I was with him and used my hat for a landing-net. And that was the jolliest day of my life, except this one which I am now telling of.

Well, as I say, it was a ripping morning. Deighton won the toss, and was hugely pleased about it, and walked about explaining to the men on his own side the system by which he had done it.

Buckoak chose to bat, so our fellows went out to field. I have said that the sun was getting hot, and when Japp crossed the ground and felt it, he thought it was not a day for a sweater, and went back to put it in the pavilion tent. And it was because of a small thing like that that all the tremendous business happened.

Japp left my father and the others, and, to make a short cut to the changing-tent, he took a flying leap over the ropes into some long grass. He cleared the rope right enough, but under the beastly long grass where he landed there was a log of wood lying hidden. He lit on this, but, of course, at first we did not know what had happened; only we saw him fall down, and it was a minute or two before he shoved out his head and waved his arm.

I was over by the scoring-tent, and I ran to see what was up, and when I reached him, I found the most wretched thing you can think of was the matter. I have already said he was about the best bat we had,

besides being one of those men who have ripping luck—ripping for themselves, that is—for he always hit up two or three catches, which somehow generally got missed. He said that this was on account of some cute peculiarity in the way he held his bat, and he showed me exactly how; but it did not work as a general rule, for I've tried it.

Well, when I got into the long grass, I saw Japp making for the tent on his hands and knees. I called out to him, and he just turned his head, and I saw his face was all white and wet. That gave me a bit of a shock, I can tell you.

"What's wrong, Japp?" I said.

And Japp answered in a husky sort of voice: "I've only bin and turned my ankle on a slippy, old log over there, Master Jim, sir, but I'll be all right in a minute."

He wasn't, though. But he argued it round and round with old Dr. Spenser, when he came, and he'd have cheeked him, too, for Spenser said he wouldn't be walking for weeks, only then my father hurried up. Father has that sort of blue eyes that look all right until you think you can cheek him; then they show a sort of spark, and you find you can't.

"Hullo, Japp, you don't mean to say——" says father, when he got sight of the ankle, swelled up as big as a loaf.

"I'll be all right inside of ten minutes, sir," says Japp, trying to buck up, and giving old Spenser a sulky look. "Trust to me, sir. I know——"

"There is no earthly use in delaying the match for Japp, Colonel," shoves in old Spenser; "he won't be playing much inside of ten weeks, let alone ten minutes. You can see for yourself."

"Looks very like it," says my father. "I'm afraid you must give in, Japp. Then there's nothing for it but to play old Appleby," and he turned to me. "You run up to the village, Jim, and tell Appleby that I should be glad if he can make it convenient to play; and if he can't," I heard him say to old Spenser, "the boy had better play himself."

Now, you may think me a beast, and I think I was a beast, too, but for the minute I couldn't make myself feel sorry about Japp's ankle, for I'd sooner play in a man's match than anything in the world nearly. But I started off up the road as hard as I could go.

Appleby keeps the inn where we have our lunch on match days, and as I ran towards it, I did hope there would be something to keep Appleby at home and to prevent his playing. I found only Mrs. Appleby at the "Dog and Bacon," for Appleby had driven into Dorley on business about some sheep. So I shouted out that it couldn't be helped, and turned to run out of the house; but as I was bolting through the passage, I ran right into somebody's arms. Whoever it was caught me and said—

"Hold hard, youngster! What's this about a cricket match?"

I told all about Japp in two minutes, and while I was talking, I kept staring at his face, which was very brown. He was biggish, and wore a soft hat, and he looked as if he could jump over a five-barred gate and forget to boast about it afterwards. And I liked the sort of laugh he had awfully.

He began to walk down the road with me under the trees, and I told him what hard lines it was, and how Deighton always brought professionals, although we were weak, because he couldn't bear being beaten, and just how it all stood. But I didn't tell him that I was going to play substitute, which was one of the luckiest things that ever happened to me. Then I asked him if he played cricket.

He said "Yes." So then I asked him if he were considered good. This may seem rude, but, you know, it was really very important for me to find out. He laughed and said that was a leading question. Anyhow, I told him he'd better play for us, and that I'd go on and speak to my father.

He looked at me for a minute, and then he said, in a drawling sort of way: "Well, I don't mind if I do."

That is exactly how it happened. He went back to the inn to put on some clothes he said he had for tennis, and which he thought would do, while I ran down pretty excited to tell our side what I'd done.

"What is the name of the man?" said my father.

But I had forgotten to find out that, and then they asked me if he could play. I had to say again I didn't know, and then they asked me why I had asked him. I said it seemed to me a good thing to do, and they would have put a lot more questions, only then the brown-faced man came down from the inn. My father thanked him for playing, and wanted to know if he bowled, to which he replied: "Not much."

So he was put to field out in the country on the leg side. Then Kilburn and a man who had played a lot at Cambridge a year or two ago opened the Buckoak innings. In

a general way, when playing a village like Carkhurst, Buckoak, when they won the toss, would bat up to lunch, after it till about four o'clock, and then Deighton would declare his innings closed, and put on his two best bowlers, who would fire the opposing side out in about an hour, on the average.

In this match about which I am trying to tell you, it looked as if that might happen, for Kilburn and the Cambridge man soon settled down, and hit the bowling about like anything. There was forty on the board when Kilburn tried to book a short one, and it went straight up in the air, when Pugsley ran half way up the pitch from behind the wicket and nearly muffed it, but he didn't quite. After that, Maddox, who makes a lot of runs for Buckoak, went in, and he was caught off his batting glove, at which I cheered like mad. It is too much fag to go through how everyone got out, and I shan't do it. The score was 115 for 5 wickets at lunch, and up to that my brown-faced fellow had fielded most awfully well, at which I was glad, for I felt the responsibility, and I was funky he would drop a catch or something. I walked up to the "Dog and Bacon" with him, and tried to pump him about where he'd played cricket; but it wasn't any good, for when we got there, he knew a good deal more about the scores I'd made than I knew about those he'd made.

When lunch was over, Deighton drank the health of the Carkhurst Cricket Club. He said he hoped they would do well, and win a lot of matches this year, but he said it in a bluffing, loud way he has, and I could see that no one would be more surprised than himself if they did.

The brown-faced man winked at me when he'd finished, and said (we'd got rather well acquainted by this time): "He doesn't think much of your chances hereabouts, Jimmy. He's just going to play the match out to please you."

I laughed at this, because it was exactly what Deighton said by his manner. Then my father got up and made his usual speech about winning if we could, even if the odds were against us.

Going back to the ground, my father talked to the brown-faced fellow, and we found he was a friend of the Berfords, new people who had just come to live in the neighbourhood. He said he was a good bit out of practice, as he hadn't touched a bat for a while. I asked him if he wasn't fond of cricket, for he fielded so keenly he ought to be; and he laughed in the way I liked at the first, but he said nothing.

By that time we had nearly got back to the ground, and Deighton joined us. He had been jawing away to his side, giving them hints and telling the tail they must wag up to form if they meant to beat really strong teams later on.

He went in with the other fellow who was "not out" at lunch. Deighton is rather a good bat, though slow; owing to his not being fond of taking risks, he will never hit a ball hard unless it is outside the leg stump. And, curiously enough, it was just this ball that he got in the second over, and he hit it jolly hard between square and long leg. It never rose more than about eight feet, and was really a ripping shot, and one he would have got six for in the ordinary way.

Before the ball was bowled, there was no fielder in that place. The brown-faced man was nearest, but thirty yards away, too square. But when he saw Deighton shaping for that stroke, he started, too, and by the time the ball was just going to pitch over the ropes, he had got in front of it, and brought off the finest catch I have ever seen; and the funny part of it was that though the catch was a difficult one, he made it look quite easy, which is a way some good fielders have.

No man was ever more surprised than Deighton, and he banged his bat on the pitch and walked away as if he had been annoyed by someone in an unnecessary manner. Once, when I did that, my father took my bat away and sent me from the game, but, of course, an awfully old man of thirty, like Deighton, can do as he likes.

There were now six wickets down for 148, and the other four who still had to go in were fellows really qualified to play for Buckoak, so I knew they wouldn't make many runs. But there were some snicks through the slips and an over-shy or two, so that 173 was up on the telegraph before the last man was out. We did jolly well to get them out for that. Still, in an ordinary way, all we Carkhurst people thought we'd be beaten by 80 or 90 runs, though we pretended to fancy our chances.

One of the rottenest things you can do is to crab your own side at a time like this. You may think what you like in your own mind, but you needn't go about saying it. Yet plenty of fellows do this. So my father bucked up our team all he knew while he was writing out the order.

I could see his opinion of the brown-faced

man was a pretty big one, as it should have been after the catch, and he jawed with him for two or three minutes, and then wrote his name down fifth, which the brown-faced man said was his lucky place. I looked at the order to find out his name, and it was Downer—Mr. S. Downer—and I noticed Deighton came to look at the order, too, for the same purpose, and I heard him say—

"Downer? I never heard of a fellow of that name in this part of the country, or, in fact, in connection with any cricket anywhere. I suppose he will never catch another catch like that in his life. It is just like my infernal luck!"

Well, I went to Mr. Downer and asked him if I should give him a few balls, and he said "Yes," but he didn't put any pads on, which at the time I thought rather insulting, but I don't now.

While I was bowling to him and he was just patting the balls back to me, Deighton came and watched, and he watched about four balls, and then turned off on his heel with a superior sort of smile.

Then the Carkhurst innings began. Deighton put Kilburn on to start the bowling; he is second change for the county. Byles was on at the other end; he also is an awfully good bowler, though I have heard people say that really good bats could swipe him all over the shop. I'm not going to pretend that our first wicket didn't have some luck, because it did, and both of the batsmen made most of their runs down the slips or by snicking yorkers off their leg stumps, which is a pretty sure way of getting four, though it is beastly hard on the bowler. Anyway, we made 32 runs before Byles bowled a yorker which Pugsley failed to snick, so he was out. The next man was Alvey, who is good, but generally rather disappointing, because after making two or three of the finest shots you could hope to see, he gets out with a rotten ball that he ought to have hit for four. There are lots of cricketers like this, and it is the people who don't play regularly with them who always have the highest notion of what they can do. And on that day this was just what happened to Alvey, for after placing Kilburn's fast one to leg most beautifully for four, he tried to hook a slow one and hit up a potty catch to Deighton at point.

The fellow who went in second wicket did not do any better, so that when it came to Downer's turn to go in, the score was 39 for three, and we all felt that unless a miracle happened, Carkhurst were as good as beaten, especially as the last three men had never been known to make double figures in a decent match.

You may bet I was pretty keen that Downer should make some sort of a score, and when he walked out, the people raised a bit of a cheer. Certainly he looked fine. He had on a white hat, under which his face looked browner than ever; his shirt was open at the throat, and his neck was thick and round and strong; his sleeves, that were turned up a bit, showed a ripping fine forearm with big muscles on it, just like brown wood that had been graved by a chisel.

"I hope he can bat as well as he can field," said my father, but he said it in a tone that made me think he considered that almost too much to hope for.

There were four balls to go of the over, and he played the first three jolly carefully.

"Seems to get them in the middle of his bat," said Alvey.

Well, the fourth ball, which happened to be a bit short, he sort of forced on the on-side for one, and for about ten minutes he kept on playing like that, and 50 went up.

At this time Deighton thought he'd change the bowling, and so he put on the Cambridge fellow, who used to be famous for slow leg-breaks. Downer got down his end second ball of the over, and as soon as the ball was in the air, he ran out and hit it full pitch into our park. The next ball, which I suppose was meant to prevent him doing that again, was very short, and Downer drew away from it and cut it for four on the off-side, where there were no fielders. I expect these two hits flurried the bowler, because the next ball was a full pitch, off which Downer took another four. Then old Deighton went up to the bowler and whispered something into his ear, and the next two balls were so wide that they had to be left alone.

Of course, I guessed that Deighton would put Kilburn on again next over. So he did, but it didn't seem to make any difference to Mr. Downer. I have never, never seen anyone play cricket like he did! There were no half measures with him, I can tell you. He either played the ball, if it was a good length, for one, or if it was a bit over-pitched or a bit short, he hit it out of the ring. I have watched a good many innings, some of them by pretty good bats, but they were nothing to Mr. Downer. He seemed to spot what sort of ball was coming almost as soon as it left the bowler's hand, and he put himself at once into a position to play it



"He ran out and hit it full pitch into our park."

or hit it. It appeared as if no kind of ball gave him the least trouble.

It was one of the finest things to see Byles rubbing his head and tearing his hair. As for me, there wasn't a more pleased fellow in England, for if I hadn't asked him, Mr. Downer would never have played for Carkhurst. Once he looked round, and I waved my hat as hard as I could and shouted, though the next minute I was sorry I had, for I thought it might excite him.

But it didn't. The curious part of it was that Mr. Downer looked as cool as ice, but he made everyone else get into a state of the most frightful excitement by the splendid things he did with the bat. You should have seen old Patch, the blacksmith's father. He's most awfully old, and goes on two sticks, but when Downer was in the middle of his innings, old Patch kept screaming—

"'It 'im into archard, master! 'It 'im into Pugsley's winders!" And when Mr. Downer really did something like this, Patch forgot and waved his stick, till he fell down and had to be picked up and put on a seat till he could get his breath.

And all the time Mr. Downer was going on hitting, and Kilburn began to get rattled and to bowl a little short, which was a splendid thing for us.

But in the meanwhile the fellows at the other end were getting out, and when Benners was bowled, 138 was up for 7. But it was over, and Mr. Downer had to take Byles's bowling. He played two balls and hit three fours, which made the score 150, and there was still one ball to go. He had got 96 runs, so he wanted just one more boundary to make 100.

Warpdale, who is the parish clerk, and who fancies himself no end at cricket, though he is a beastly poke, was in, and Mr. Downer played the last ball of that over and called Warpdale for a run. Warpdale ran about three yards up the pitch and then yelled to Downer to get back. But meantime the long field had shied the ball in to the bowler, who put the wicket down, and Warpdale was run out, which, as you will understand, served him jolly well right.

When he got to the tent, my father spoke to him in a way that made him go red all over, and told him he had done his best to lose the match for us, and I suppose it was because of Warpdale's nearly running Mr. Downer out that my father went in next. He spoke to Downer, and said that although he was an old cricketer, he would run anything he called, and he added something about Mr. Downer's magnificent play.

Now, my father had to take a whole over from Kilburn, who was bowling jolly well and fast. It is a queer thing, but there seems to be a sort of fate about Kilburn's bowling to my father, for he always bowls him out whenever they play on opposite sides. On the present occasion, however, my father blocked the first ball, so that it rolled into the middle of the pitch, and they ran one quite easily, while all the villagers shouted: "Colonel's 'is master!" and "Squire won't be took in be 'e!"

The last five balls of Kilburn's over were jolly good ones, although Mr. Downer got a three off the sixth, which brought him down to Byles's end again.

By this time Byles didn't dare to pitch one up. It might have been better for his side if he had, for three times Mr. Downer hooked him to square leg for four.

Then my father had to face Kilburn again, and this was at the most awfully excruciating point of the whole match, for we only wanted four to win. I took my hat off and sat in the sun to revive me, for I felt about sick, and no one was speaking a word all round the ropes, except two or three ladies in the tent, who didn't know what a dreadful moment it was, and were taken up with a cook who'd got smallpox or some little thing like that.

Well, I'm sure you'd have betted anything that it would be Mr. Downer who made the winning hit, but it wasn't; for off the third ball of the over my father made a four through the slips.

The crowd made a huge row and yelled like mad, and Deighton came in gnawing his moustache and jawing about its being unfair to play strangers, although, mind you, he had agreed to Mr. Downer's playing before he knew the kind of player he was.

Mr. Downer had made 127 not out, and it's no use my telling you what I think of his cricket, because I couldn't, even with a dictionary. My father congratulated him, and he said something about being lucky, which Deighton overheard, and that is how he joined into the conversation.

"Lucky?" said he. "You're certainly very lucky. Not that I'd like to say you didn't make some fine shots; but anyone who makes 100 against our bowling may well consider himself lucky, especially if he is not a famous cricketer. However, to show our appreciation of your innings, I shall be glad to offer

you a match for Buckoak against Sodderbury. Will you play?"

The brown-faced man looked him in the eyes.

"Sorry, I am playing elsewhere," he said.

"You can chuck," says Deighton grandly.

"I don't think I can do that," said Mr. Downer.

"Why not? You won't get such a good match every day." Deighton was very hot on getting Mr. Downer.

"I'm afraid I can't, thanks."

"Who is the match against?" said Deighton again.

"Leicestershire," said Mr. Downer, as quiet as you like.

"And who may you be playing for?" cries out old Deighton, in a flurry.

"The Australians," said Mr. Downer; "we landed a few days ago!"

* * * * *

Mrs. Deighton shook hands very warmly with my father, and said she was glad of our success. I think somehow she meant it, too; she's a very decent sort.

And that is the story of the most interesting thing that ever happened to me, or, for that matter, to any other fellow.

I shan't tell you the real name of Mr. S. Downer, or Sundowner, as he told me it stood for—which is Australian for tramp or wanderer—but although I am an Englishman, if he makes a good score in any of the Test matches, as I'm sure he will, I shall send him a wire of congrats., and I shall be jolly glad to have to do it.

TO A WOUNDED BIRD.

THOU shalt feel no more the wind on thy wing,
Nor float on the breath of the breeze;
Thou shalt drowse no more on the blossoming branch
'Neath the lullaby song of the trees.

Thou shalt seek no more in the green of the year
Thy love and thy heart's desire;
Thou shalt mate no more in the scent of the thorn,
Nor nest in the dark of the briar.

Thou hast fought thy last in the joy of the storm,
The clouds shall not hide thee again.
What is left thee now but to creep in the grass
Thy maimed wings uplifting in vain?

Thou art done with love, and from hope out-thrown,
Yet I succour thy life's brief hour,
For it may be that He Who has marked thy fall
Shall deal with me so in His power.

For I, too, have fought in the joy of the storm
With a strong and a passionate wing,
I have flown star high in the clear of the night
And loved in the green of the spring.

I shall rise no more from the cold of the ground,
Where I creep with a wounded breast,
Yet it may be that He Who has marked thy fall
Shall hold me as dear as the rest.

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER.

RAGTIME.

By BARONESS VON HUTTEN.

I MET him first on one of the Channel boats. It was a cold day, and he was walking up and down, as I was, trying to keep warm.

It was his nose that first attracted my attention — a delicate, pale nose that even the nipping cold could not annoy to the extent of redness ; a nose at once haughty and picturesque in its well-cut lines. "The nose," I thought, as I surveyed it as it rested on the edge of the collar of his top-coat, "of a conqueror."

Then, in order to light a pipe, he folded down the collar, and I beheld his chin—a chin humble and patient and eminently unsuccessful.

So I wondered about him as I tramped up and down the almost deserted deck ; and when, a few minutes later, I saw him standing gazing back at the dim bulk on the horizon that was France, I drew near and waited for him to speak to me.

"I beg your pardon," he said, after a few moments, "but didn't you write 'Pam'?"

"I did."

It was as good an opening as another. He had seen my picture somewhere, and he liked my books. I was properly surprised and grateful, and when the time was ripe for my own small attack, I made it.

"And what do *you* do?" I asked briskly.

"I?"

"Yes. Books or pictures?"

His mild eyes flashed with pleasure. "No. I write music. Do you like music?"

I did, and said so. "And what do you write?"

"Songs. Perhaps you sing?"

Again I said "Yes," and helped him out by adding that I should be delighted if he would send me a song of his.

Just then someone joined me, and he slipped away.

* * * * *

A week later the song came. The words were those immortalised by Schubert, the "Erl-König," and the music, written in D sharp minor in the beginning, changed ruthlessly and unreasonably to three other keys before the last discordant chord.

The chords were all discordant.

Bad, very bad, in every particular, and, worst crime of all, it was utterly unsingable, written evidently by one without the slightest knowledge of what that willing horse, the human voice, will at last baulk at.

It was a most awful song, and I shuddered to see, written in very legible letters on its cover, an address. He hoped, the man with the nose, that I would write and tell him what I thought of his song. This being quite impossible, I wrote a "hasty" note—it took me quite a quarter of an hour to compose it—saying that the song had come, and that I thanked him very much for it, but wished the accompaniment were not quite so frightfully difficult to read. And I was his very truly.

More truly than I knew was I his.

For one day, not long after, while I was singing to myself, the casual lift-man let him into the flat, turning him loose therein, and, of course, led by the sounds of music, he came straight to me.

"I hope you don't mind," he began properly, and I answered him with hospitality. He was very poorly dressed, and he looked very ill. I had not heard him cough before, and it was awful to hear.

He had "brought some little things for me to look over."

I gave him tea, and then together we looked over the little things.

He played well, with a curious fluency that seemed to accord ill with that masterful, unyielding nose. The weakness of his chin was not, so to speak, audible in his music. It was not that it was weak music ; it was just not music at all. I judged that he had heard some of Richard Strauss's symphonies, and that the chaos of painful sound to which I politely and miserably listened was the result of the great German's effect on his imagination.

"You play very well," I said at last, my ears reeling.

"Oh, yes, I can play," he returned, in obvious disparagement of his redeeming gift, "but can I *compose?*"

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"Fled hurriedly on the advent of a woman five feet four in height, with a toy terrier in her muff."

He looked at me anxiously, and I went to the fire and slowly put on a stick while I awaited inspiration. His clothes were so shabby and his cough so bad!

"Do you think I can?" Mercilessly he put his question.

"My dear man, why do you ask *me* to judge? Go to a musician or to a music-publisher."

But his nose, almost transparent in the blazing light of my fire, was inexorable.

"You are a musician, and I want your opinion." But one's serious opinion about one's dearest art cannot be trifled with, and mine at that moment being expressible only by the word "Bosh!" I could not give it.

So I looked wise, and said that if he would leave the music, I'd have another go at it by myself.

"But you can't play it!" he cried triumphantly.

"Then, if I can't play, how can I be a musician?"

I was all logic, all wisdom; but his nose was unyielding, and Heaven knows what would have happened had not the casual porter at that moment turned another bewildered visitor loose into the flat, and the situation was thus saved.

He, the man with the nose, whom all my adroitness and majesty of demeanour had failed to affect, fled hurriedly on the advent of a woman five feet four in height, with a toy terrier in her muff.

That was because she did *not* write books, and was therefore swimming in seas far beyond his ken!

* * * * *

A few days after this I left London, and did not return until the spring. All through the winter I had heard nothing of my friend the composer, and his dreadful songs lay unopened among my music.

One evening in June I was leaving Covent Garden, after hearing "Madame Butterfly," and on the steps of the Opera House I saw him. If he had seen me, I should probably have fled; but I saw him first, and could not.

Could not, because he looked, in his increased ill-health, his increased shabbiness, his increased hopelessness, so piteous that I had not the heart to evade him.

He started when I touched his arm, and then glanced hastily down at himself.

"I—I wonder you recognised me," he murmured. "You are very kind."

"I am sorry to see you looking—less well, but of course I recognised you."

And then, because I simply could not help it, because they were the only words I could say that would please him, I added: "And how goes the music?"

He flushed hotly, coughing before he could answer.

"I took your advice," he said.

"My advice?"

"Yes, to see a publisher. But—it was no good. They want ballads, these English—*ballads!*"

Words cannot express the malignant scorn he put into the tame and innocuous word.

"Are you not English?" I asked, for the sake of saying something.

"English? Oh, yes—of course I am!" His surprise at my question was perfectly genuine, and I saw that his implied alienism had been merely that of every unsuccessful British artist.

I was at this point mercifully called away by one of our party, and with the pleasantest smile I could produce, left the poor man, as it was plain everyone and everything always left him.

The fourth and last time I saw him was at his lodgings in Kentish Town, whither I hurried one warm, rainy evening, in a taxi-cab, with a little boy, his child, who had been sent for me. The father was, this child, whose name was Percy, told me, in an accent far less pure than that of his father, dying.

Dying, and he wanted to see me.

So on we hurried, the poor little boy and I, through the pleasant, warm wet.

When we arrived at the house—one of thousands apparently, all exactly alike, even to the geraniums, priceless flower of the poor, in the windows—a woman came to meet us.

A slovenly woman, with an accent one degree worse than that of the child, and a bolero of imitation Irish lace dragged askew over her cotton dress. She also wore coral earrings and several cheap rings.

But there were real tears in her eyes, real sorrow in her voice, as she confirmed the child Percy's story.

"'E's going fast, ma'am—my lady," she said. "It's very kind of you to come."

He was in bed, of course, lying with his eyes shut.

When I came in, he looked up eagerly.

"It is very kind of you, Baroness," he began, and then slowly, piteously, yet always with his old invincible obstinacy, he told me why he had sent for me. He *knew* that his music was good. It had failed only because he had no influence, no "pull." And he



"How could I tell him that I was much less good than my poor Pam?"

was dying, and his wife and the three children had absolutely nothing.

"She has been a good, unselfish wife to me, and a perfect mother," he said, unconsciously speaking as though I had said something disparaging of her—"a perfect mother."

"I am sure of it," I agreed, happy to be able to say so.

"Well, they will have nothing, and they've no one to turn to. And, you see," he went on, after a brief fit of coughing, "I've read 'What Became of Pam,' and —she, 'Pam,' was so poor herself and worked so hard, and was so—kind and good" (it is a tribute of which I am very proud) "that I felt sure you would understand and try to help."

How could I tell him that I was much less good than my poor Pam? How refuse to use the influence that he quite erroneously believed me to have in the music-publishing world? How say that I would not take his poor, useless wares to market?

How let him die unsolaced?

So I promised, and bade him "Good-bye."

He was very grateful, very apologetic, but always unrelenting and always faintly triumphant. He had his own way, and sadly I left this poor, little house with a great packet of MSS. music in my arms.

Percy and Elfrida and Claribel accompanied me to the taxicab, and with a farewell bow to their mother, who stood sobbing in the doorway, I sped away, depressed with the knowledge of the utter hopelessness of the

task I had undertaken. No one, I knew, would ever even read through to its end one of these awful songs. And, then, how tell that poor mother?

* * * * *

No one ever even saw the awful songs, for I never took them to the publisher, and yet Mrs. Jessop received from me, only a week after her husband's funeral, a cheque for more money than the poor woman had ever before seen.

And she and Percy and Elfrida and Claribel are now living very comfortably in Exeter, from which city she and her husband had come, and they are, in their humble way, provided for for life.

And for all this Jessop himself was responsible. For I found among the awful songs six of the most enchanting compositions that I ever heard in my life.

Three of them he called simply "Ragtimes" (but I named them, as seemed appropriate, each for one of the children), and of the other three one was an intermezzo after the manner of "Salome," of American fame, and two others, coon songs.

Common music, unscientific, unclassified by any but the absurd word "Ragtimes," and yet in their way perfect.

Melodious, delicious, flowing, easy, haunting. Ah, but *haunting!*

Now as I write I hear, as I have heard any day during the last two years, the clean-cut notes of a barrel-organ playing—no doubt to the delighted dancing of nimble-footed children of the poor—one of them, "Elfrida" this time. A delicate and beautiful air, and I love it, as I love the others, for they are of the music that, speaking a simple language to simple people, gives joy inconceivable to thousands. And it seems to me that music, like sunlight and fresh air, ought to be free to and understanded of all.

Ah, my poor man of the nose, you may indeed be triumphant, for you have done much, as the children dancing in the slums would tell you. Little they'd care if they heard the story of your failure in Straussian flights; little would they regret the coldness shown by monstrous ballad-seekers to your painful symphonic poems.

To them you gave music that makes them laugh and dance, and that indeed is a triumph.

And I like to think, when I catch a strain of one of your, by yourself, scorned Ragtime compositions, that even you, scorning them, must have enjoyed writing them, as your wife told me you did, after doing some real 'ard work, just to cheer yourself up a bit!

You have cheered many, and so I think your nose was not in vain built on lines of triumph.

THE SCENT OF THE LILAC.

THE scent of lilac in the air
Hath made him drag his steps and pause;
Whence comes this scent within the Square,
Amid the dust its turmoils cause?
A barrow stands beside the curb,
With fragrant blossoms laden high;
Speak low, nor stare, lest we disturb
His sudden reverie!

He sees us not, nor heeds the din
Of clanging car and scuffling throng;
His eyes see fairer sights within,
And memory hears the blackbird's song
As once it trilled against the day,
And shook his slumber in a room
Where drifted with the breath of May
The lilac's sweet perfume.

The heart of boyhood in him stirs;
The wonder of the morning skies,
Of sunset gold behind the firs,
Is kindled in his dreaming eyes:
How far off is this sordid place,
As turning from our sight away
He crushes to his hungry face
A purple lilac spray!

WALTER PRICHARD EATON.



"The rickshaw boy is costumed in orange, with a head-dress of huge horns."

A Rickshaw Ride in Durban.

By DOROTHEA BARRETT.

THIS evening Euphemia and Theodora borrow Lootina and go rickshaw riding.

Lootina is the hotel pug, and if you ask the manageress very politely, she will sometimes lend Lootina to you for an hour or two.

On the days when you remember that England and home are very far away from Africa, and that many hundred miles of deep—and, as Theodora practically remarks, mostly very unquiet—sea lie between, on such days there is something very English and homely and comfortable about Lootina. Perhaps that is why the soldiers all cheered her when she was first taken into camp. For Lootina was "looted" in the war, and that is how she got her name. She is fawn in colour, with a small, black, velvet face, and a very troubled expression, as if she had never forgotten the discomforts she endured out on the veldt, two goggling eyes, and a double curl to her tail. At least, it is a double curl when she is entirely happy, but when she is a little worried, it is only a single curl, and when she is really miserable,

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there is no curl at all. There was no curl at all this evening when she started, for Lootina loathes rickshaw riding, and prefers to lie comfortably snoring in the big, sunny courtyard of the hotel.

The rickshaw is decorated with branches of pale mauve blossoms and trails of greenery, as for a carnival. The rickshaw boy is costumed in orange, with a head-dress of huge horns. Euphemia is in a pale lilac muslin, all soft and frilly, that swirls and floats round her like a sort of cloud, and she has on a big white hat with soft gauze draped round it. Theodora is in white muslin with a pale blue sunshade, and Lootina sits between them with a pink bow.

Theodora says they look like a pantomime.

Theodora is in a morose and peevish mood. She says that dusky people, all hopping and capering round her, as they do in Durban, get on her nerves, and that Dulanzana has been sweeping all down the courtyard over her. Dulanzana is the Kaffir boy who waits on them. He wears a holland tunic, trimmed with scarlet braid, and a tiny sailor-hat on his head, with a tall, black ostrich plume erect on one side of it. Dulanzana wears his hair oiled up into little lumps like baby astrachan. Sometimes he discards the hat and wears only the ostrich feather in the astrachan; sometimes he wears neither hat nor plume, only just a bunch of ordinary white safety-pins dangling over one ear, and some small, bright sardine tins round his neck. Dulanzana never walks; he hops and dances on bare feet, and he sings a small, tuneless Kaffir song to himself all the time in a contented sort of little way. He says "Yes yes, miss-*is*" to whatever you say to him, with his voice rising to a small shriek on the "is." He never understands what you ask for, so he brings what he thinks you would like, which is generally water. Dulanzana thinks you like lots of water, and brings it in jugs full, water hot and water cold, coming capering along the courtyard with a jug in each hand.

Dulanzana loves to sweep. He likes making lots and lots of dust, working joyously to raise as much as he can, and if you come back suddenly to your room, you find him singing and beaming in a perfect fog of it.

The first evening the travellers arrived in Durban, they were weary and homesick, and when they rang the bell and Dulanzana arrived, Theodora gave way altogether, and sat on the floor and cried and cried, and asked why she had ever left England, and besought them to take her back, and to take Dulanzana away and give her a white chambermaid; and Dulanzana stood in the middle of the room, staring from one to another and giggling cheerfully.

Euphemia is the unselfish one. It is Euphemia who carries the rugs, wraps, and parcels, who goes errands in the heat, who listens to their joys and sorrows, and to Theodora's writings—Euphemia who believes in self-sacrifice.

Theodora is the one who loses her way. It was Theodora who lost her way in Johannesburg, and stopped a whole regiment of soldiers to find it, returning home, serene and smiling, to explain, in answer to Euphemia's shocked surprise, that the soldiers were all *most* polite, and that if she hadn't asked them, she would have been wandering there still. Theodora is the one who, when you send her out walking, returns riding. In London she takes hansoms; in Melbourne, electric trams; at the seaside, bath-chairs; in Christchurch, New Zealand, canoes; in Colombo and Durban, rickshaws. The particular conveyance of the country, *that* Theodora takes. Anything to save her the trouble of walking. "You see, girls, it was like this," Theodora pathetically explains, "there was I, *so* hot and tired, and there was the rickshaw drawn up close beside me, and, before I realised what I was doing, there was I *in* the rickshaw."

Euphemia is the one who loses things.

Everything she has. Purses, bangles, keys, handkerchiefs, letters. It was Euphemia who, on the *Manora* coming out from England, wrote a long letter home, telling her impressions of everyone on board, and then forgot and left it in one of the library books for everyone to read. That kind of thing is in Euphemia's family, for it was her sister Leonora who, when she was staying with Theodora, lost her engagement-ring, and after everyone had hunted for it everywhere, out in the garden, up and down the drive, and all over the house, found it in her own hair! Leonora has thick, dark curly hair, with glints of bronze chestnut in it, and she has one curl in the middle which does most of the damage, for Leonora is one of the biggest flirts you ever met. No doubt she was arranging the curl when she lost her ring, and it slipped from her finger into her hair.

Euphemia and Leonora, wherever they go, leave behind them trails of small trifles; as in a game of hare and hounds, you may



"Theodora gave way altogether."

always track Euphemia or Leonora by the trifles dropped on their way.

Euphemia and Theodora take their ride along by the harbour, where the sea is dashing foam against the breakwater, and the hills around are covered with soft, greeny shrubs. There is a purple and crimson sunset, and there are big masted vessels anchored right in the glow of it. Rickshaw boys are standing about in robes of white, orange, scarlet, any and every colour, with big pom-poms stuck over their ears, and vivid grass-green plumes waving in their hair. Women go stately past, gorgeous in draperies of purple, scarlet, blue, and apple green. The sea is clearest blue, the soil red, and everywhere are orange trees and huge scarlet blossoms.

They return as the sun goes down, and the glow fades into a soft peach light. Lootina has subsided into a small heap at the bottom of the rickshaw. There is no sound except the chirp of a cricket, the patter of the rickshaw boy's bare feet in the dust, the tinkle of the rickshaw bell, and now and again a small, pathetic snort from Lootina, who has forgotten her troubles in deep and pig-like slumber. It grows quite dark; here and there a dusky figure slips silently past.

There is a heavenly scent of flowers, like —like—what is it like? Like hyacinths? Yes, hyacinths. You might close your eyes and almost fancy you were back in England. Oh, scent of hyacinths, what memories you bring! England in spring! Why, over there in England, away across the sea, it *is* spring. At home there the country will be the freshest, greenest green. The celandines, the violets, and the jonquils will all be blowing, the rooks will be cawing and building and stealing and tearing each other's nests down. By and by, in the sweet old rectory garden, the lilacs will be scenting the whole air. The swallows will be building in the porch of the old church, and in the quiet churchyard the chestnuts will be bursting into bloom, and the golden laburnum will be hanging yellow showers over the tiny mound which marks the place where Phyllis lies. Phyllis, who departed this life aged two months, having, so to speak, merely glanced at Life, and, finding it too hard, retired. England, where the meadows are dotted about with what appear in the distance to be small white bundles of laundry, which on closer inspection turn out to be new-born lambs. England, where each morning you rise, you find new green things that have rushed and hurried and bustled out during the hours you have been sleeping. "O all ye green things upon the earth, praise ye the Lord!" Is there any place on earth or under the heaven to which we hope to go more beautiful, more refreshing, more exquisite, than England in the spring? In London the flower-girls are offering loaded baskets of violets, mimosa, primroses; piano-organs are cheerfully playing, and men are shouting: "Flowering plants, all a-blowing and a-growing!"

Here the boy sets down the rickshaw poles on the ground with a jerk that slides Lootina nearly out. Awake, awake, Lootina! re-curl your tail hopefully, for here you are, back at the hotel.

A moment later they are standing on the verandah, looking up at the moon, with Theodora quoting dreamily:

> Friends far away, whom half the world sever,
> Friends far away, whom love forgetteth never,
> Friends who will keep a place in anxious hearts for ever.

"Good night!"

"Good night to all that we love, good night to all that love us," adds Euphemia, in the formula which they repeat every night.

There are many who love Euphemia; she is the one who does not flirt, but whose eyes are set in her head in such a way that the result is the same.

"Good night!"

THE INVASION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

By the Hon. CHARLES RUSSELL.

The Romans.



N the early summer morning of the 28th of August, B.C. 55, a stern man, with deep-set eyes, anxiously paced the deck of a vessel in the English Channel and gazed up at the white cliffs of Kent. He had a fleet of some eighty vessels, having on board about 8,000 men. Large crowds were gathered on the tall cliffs looking down upon the strange fleet, the more strange because the Britons, although living on a sea-girt island, had no fleet and few sea-going vessels. Julius Cæsar's fleet tacked slowly down Channel past where are now Ramsgate, Dover, and Folkestone, looking for a safe landing-place, until they came to the low land now called Romney Marsh, between Sandgate and Rye. The crowds had followed the fleet down the coast, and the Romans only landed with difficulty and loss. It was clear Cæsar's force was too small for the intended conquest, and after three weeks he departed, to return, however, in the next year, with 800 ships and 20,000 men, to land once more on Romney Marsh. In spite of the presence of a few Romans, our island retained her independence practically intact for the hundred years following Cæsar's invasion; but in A.D. 43 the Emperor Claudius was induced to attempt a more thorough invasion, and his generals, Plautius and Vespasian, commanding large armies, landed along the coast sheltered by the Isle of Wight. The Emperor himself came to Britain and witnessed a battle. Among the captives taken in the campaign were Caractacus and his daughter, on whom her father, when he was pardoned by Claudius, gratefully bestowed the name of Claudia. She and her husband, Pudens, afterwards became Christians, and are said to be the Claudia and Pudens mentioned in St. Paul's Epistle. The Romans gained dominion over England, but no real progress was ever effected in the work of subduing Scotland to their rule.

The Saxons.

The last Roman eagle departed from Britain in the first half of the fifth century, and from then the invasions of the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes began and continued rapidly, so that by the end of the fifth century the invaders had become the dominant race.

These invaders began by peacefully forming settlements, then their warriors assisted the native Celt against the Scots and Picts, and finally became masters of Britain.

The Danes.

From the sixth to the eleventh century the history of England is but one long account of continual Danish invasions and contests between the Saxon and Danish chiefs for sovereignty and control. The last great battle with the northmen was, in fact, fought only a few days before the arrival at Pevensey Bay of William the Conqueror on the 27th of September, 1066.

The Normans.

William arrived with a fleet of 400 ships and 1,000 transports, and his army was estimated at 40,000 men. Harold, flushed with his victory over the northmen, arrived with an army vastly inferior, but at once decided to fight. Had Harold waited till he had gathered a sufficient force, Senlac Hill might have told a different story. As it was, Harold and his men fought and died bravely, but the mighty William triumphed, though the completion of his conquest was no simple matter. Before he could claim to have subjugated the country, he had to carry fire and sword to its furthermost end. In their struggle against his cruelties the people brought about four separate invasions in the hope of driving out the hated Conqueror. The first was made in 1067, by Eustace, Count of Boulogne, invited by the men of Kent. He landed at Dover, made a feeble attempt on Dover fortress, and then fled. The next invasion was that of Edmund, son of Harold, who landed in 1069 with



"JULIUS CÆSAR'S FIRST INVASION OF BRITAIN."

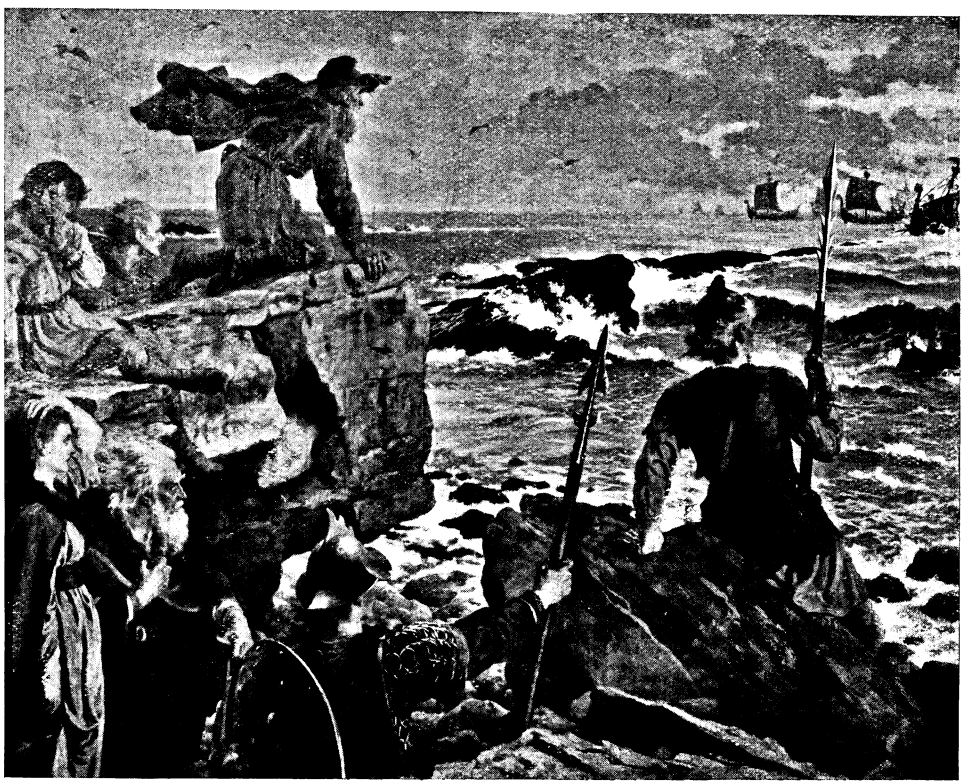
From the picture by Edward Armitage, R.A.

a small army (given by King Dermot) on the banks of the Avon and the Tamar, but he was soon defeated and forced to fly. The other invasions were effected in 1069 and 1072 by the Danes, drawn by the sympathy of race and language to help the suffering inhabitants of Britain. They sailed up the Humber and, on the first occasion, destroyed York and its Norman castle, but in both cases William found means to bribe them to return to their own country.

Disputes among the descendants of William the Conqueror as to the right of succession led to three invasions. On the 22nd of September, 1139, Matilda landed at Portsmouth with only 148 knights and took possession of Arundel Castle. She came to dispute the Crown with Stephen, who was undeniably a usurper, being descended from a daughter of William the Conqueror, while Matilda was a daughter of Henry I., son of the Conqueror. Civil war raged with varying fortunes until 1153, when matters were settled on the basis that Stephen should reign while he lived, and Matilda's son, Henry II., should succeed him. During the struggle Henry twice landed with a foreign force at Wareham, in 1142 and 1153.

The French Capture London.

When King John rode back to Windsor Castle from Runnymede, after signing Magna Charta, he flung himself on the ground, tore his hair, and bit the royal carpets with rage at having been compelled by the Barons to grant liberty to the nation. He promptly made up his mind to take revenge upon the Barons—this he did by ravaging and plundering the country, and the Barons, driven to despair, invited the French King to seize the Crown. Louis the Dauphin arrived at the Isle of Thanet in Kent with 600 vessels on May 23rd, 1216, and immediately marched on London, which was at once surrendered to him and remained in his possession for eighteen months, until September, 1217. His departure was brought about by the Barons



"HOW THE DANES CAME UP THE CHANNEL A THOUSAND YEARS AGO."

From the picture by Herbert A. Bone, reproduced by permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co., owners of the copyright.

changing their minds on the death of John, on October 19th, 1216, and placing John's son, Henry III., on the throne.

After this England was free from foreign invasion for upwards of 100 years—*viz.*, from 1216 to 1326, with the exception of one ineffectual raid on Dover by the French under Montmorenci in 1296, during the war with Scotland. In 1326, Queen Isabella, driven into opposition by the misrule of Edward II. and his favourites, sought the Court of her brother Charles le Bel, and from there invaded England, landing with Mortimer at Orwell, in Sussex, in September, 1326.



"THE LANDING OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR AT HASTINGS, 1066."

From an engraving by Hamilton.

Meeting with scarcely any resistance, she placed her son, Edward III., upon the throne, and imprisoned his worthless father in Berkeley Castle, where he suffered a dreadful death.

War for a Hundred Years.

The three sons of Philip IV. of France all died without direct heirs, but his daughter Isabella was the mother of Edward III. of England, whose claim to the throne of France gave rise to the intermittent, but prolonged, fight between France and England, known as "The Hundred Years' War." The pages of its history are bright with names of battles which are a heritage of glory. The English schoolboy finds no difficulty in remembering the doings of the Black Prince and the capture of the French King, John the Good, who was brought to London and died in the Savoy Palace, and he can draw plans of the battlefields of "Cressy" and "Poictiers" and describe the taking of Calais; it is not with these glories that we are concerned, but only with invasions of our country, and during this period we have many to chronicle.

The French partially burnt Portsmouth in 1339, and Southampton in 1340. In 1360, and again in 1380, they plundered Winchelsea and the country round, and in 1377 they made descents on Rye, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Dartmouth, and Hastings.

In 1386 the French King, Charles VI., organised with extraordinary care an invasion of England on a gigantic scale, assembling no less than 1,400 ships. England was all dismay and perturbation. The ships were to sail in August, but adverse winds held them in port till October, when they sailed, only to meet a gale which dispersed the mighty expedition



ROBERT III. OF NORMANDY.
Landed at Portsmouth in 1101.

and wrecked so many ships that the invasion was abandoned.

French descents were made along the south coast, at the Isle of Wight and Plymouth, in 1403 and 1404, and in 1405 a French fleet of 140 vessels, with an army of 12,000 men, arrived at Milford. The whole army landed, captured several towns, and advanced to Carmarthen, but upon the approach of Henry, with his army, the French invaders hastily rejoined their ships, and, carrying off their booty, sailed away.

THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

From 1460 to 1485 we had a series of landings upon our coast which it is scarcely correct to describe as invasions. They were incidents in a domestic strife between the descendants of Lionel Duke of Clarence and John of Gaunt, sons of Edward III., and were commanded by Englishmen. First, of course, we have the landing of Henry Bolingbroke, at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire (a port long since swallowed up by the sea), leading to his dethroning Richard II. and being crowned as Henry IV. in his stead.

Another invasion under Warwick and Salisbury, at Deal, in 1460, with 1,500 men, transferred the Crown from the Lancastrians to the House of York. The army of 1,500 rapidly grew to 40,000. Henry VI. was defeated and taken prisoner at Northampton, and the Duke of York, in 1461, was crowned King Edward IV.

Nine years later found Warwick engaged in another invasion, this time with the object of restoring Henry VI., whom he had dethroned in 1461. He landed at Dartmouth on September 13th, 1470. Edward IV. fled to France, to return, however, in March, 1471, with an invading force of 2,000 men. Landing at Ravenspur, he pushed rapidly southwards, and on April 14th, 1471, was fought the mighty battle of Barnet, in which Warwick was defeated and slain. On the very day of the battle, Margaret, wife of the imprisoned Henry VI., landed at Weymouth with her son, but she was defeated and her son slain at Tewkesbury. Her sorrows were completed by the death of her husband, Henry VI., a few days later.

Edward IV. was succeeded on his death in 1483 for a few brief weeks by his son, Edward V., who was soon deposed by his uncle and protector, Richard III., and with his brother was foully murdered in the Tower. The news of their murder immediately inspired the exiled Lancastrians to attempt to recover the throne, and on August 6th, 1485, Henry Tudor (Henry VII.) landed at Milford. Rapidly



THE EMPRESS MATILDA.
Granddaughter of William the Conqueror, landed at Portsmouth in 1139, and took King Stephen prisoner.



LOUIS VIII.

Son of Philip II. of France, landed at Sandwich, in Kent, in 1215. Marched on London. King John compelled to fly to the Welsh Marches.

getting support, he faced Richard on August 22nd, 1485, at Bosworth. Richard was killed, and Henry VII. was crowned on the field of battle. His marriage with Elizabeth of York united the rival Houses of York and Lancaster.

Two invasions followed in 1487 and in 1495 by adventurers personating Warwick (the imprisoned son of the late Duke of Clarence), and the younger son of Edward IV., whom they represented as having escaped. Lambert Simnel obtained the support of Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, who sent 2,000 Germans to assist him. After a stubborn fight he was defeated at Stoke—his life was spared, and he ended his days as a serving-man in the King's kitchen.

The second impostor, Perkin Warbeck, gave more trouble. Buzzing like an angry wasp round the country, he landed in Kent, in Ireland, in Scotland, and finally in Cornwall. He was defeated at Taunton, and fled to Beaulieu, in Hampshire, where he was captured, and taken to London. He was executed at Tyburn, after several attempts to escape.

The Armada.

For eight years Philip II. of Spain laboured over the preparations of the Armada. He toiled incessantly in his cabinet, writing thousands of letters in a futile endeavour to control from a distance every detail of the preparation. Such one-man centralisation clogged the wheels of progress and courted failure. Old Santa Cruz in Lisbon and Sidonia in Cadiz did all they could, but, on the 18th of April, 1587, thirty white sails appeared off Cadiz. "Some contingent of the Armada," thought Sidonia. It was nothing so welcome. The fleet of white sail obeyed the orders of the terrible Drake, who could see in the harbour nearly a hundred tall Spanish ships already crammed with stores, destined to subjugate his country. Into the harbour he dashed, and annihilated the results of years of toil and vast expenditure.

In spite of this disaster and of the warnings of Santa Cruz, Sidonia, and Parma, the obstinate Philip determined still to send his crippled and disorganised fleet to sea. Santa Cruz died broken-hearted, and Sidonia became Captain-General, and at length, in May, 1588, the Armada put to sea. Storms at once beset the host; confusion, utter and complete, overcame them, and the great fleet had to run into Corunna for shelter. On



ISABELLA, QUEEN OF EDWARD II.

Landed at Orwell, Suffolk, and deposed Edward II., in 1326.

June 24th, Sidonia wrote and implored the King to abandon the enterprise. "The crews are weakened by sickness, the provisions are rotten, and the water is stinking," he wrote in despair. Philip sternly ordered Sidonia to proceed, and on July



HENRY IV.

Landed at Ravenspur, while Richard II. was in Ireland, and deposed Richard, in 1399.

12th he once more set sail. The plan contemplated that the Armada should sail up and clear the Channel, and eventually protect the transports of the Duke of Parma from Holland (then belonging to Spain), with 30,000 men; these, with the 20,000 carried on board the 150 ships of the Armada, were to form the army of invasion. The fleet appeared off the Lizard, in Cornwall, on July 20th, but it was not until July 27th that the Spaniards anchored off Calais. All the way up the Channel they had been harried by the fleets of Howard and Seymour, which, although inferior in numbers and short of ammunition, owing to the parsimony of Queen Elizabeth's administration, were vastly superior in sailing power and in the skill of their commanders. Off Calais fireships were sent in among the Spanish fleet, and these, aided by the storm which arose, and by the skilful English seamanship, destroyed many of the invader's ships. The 130 which remained escaped with Sidonia into the North Sea and round the north of Scotland, where the storm completed their destruction, so that only 8,000 out of the 20,000 Spaniards who left their homes ever saw Spain again. Parma never got a chance of embarking, and shortly after disbanded his army.

So ended the mighty Armada, but its destruction did not end the war or the attempt of Spain at invasion. In July, 1594, a small Spanish fleet, under Don Diego Borchen, landed men in Mount's Bay, Cornwall, and after some pillage and burning, departed. In 1601 the Spanish Government despatched a fleet of forty-eight ships, with 4,000 men, under D'Aguila, to Ireland, and they landed at Kinsale, and were followed by 2,000 men in another fleet, under Ocampo, who landed at Baltimore. They were joined by a number of Irish under Tyrone, but Mountjoy defeated them with a loss of 1,200 men. Ocampo was captured, Tyrone fled to Ulster,



MARGARET, QUEEN OF HENRY VI.

Landed at Weymouth in 1471.

and D'Aguila capitulated and surrendered Kinsale and Baltimore and returned to Spain.

Elizabeth was troubled by many other threats and rumours of invasion which came



PERKIN WARBECK.

Warbeck landed in Cork in 1492, and at Deal, with 600 men, in 1495. He besieged Waterford unsuccessfully for seven days in 1495, and two years later landed at Whitesand Bay, Cornwall. Besieged Exeter with 3,000 men, and was defeated and executed.

to nothing, with the exceptions of, first, a landing by a refugee, Stafford, at Scarborough, who seized the Castle, from which he was soon expelled; and two expeditions of Spaniards and Italians at Smerthwick Harbour, in Ireland. These were easily defeated, with, however, much unnecessary slaughter and cruelty.

Charles the Second's Attempt.

Charles II. attempted in 1650 to recover his father's throne. He arrived with a Dutch fleet at the entrance of the river Spey in Scotland. He was crowned king and marched into England, but was defeated at the battle of Worcester by Cromwell. After the battle he had his hair clipped off, and wandered about as a peasant for some weeks, and eventually made his way to the sea-coast. He went in a coal-boat to France, from a point on the coast where Brighton now stands.

The Dutch in the Thames.

During the negotiations for the Treaty of Breda, De Ruyter sailed from the Texel with fifty ships, and on June 18th, 1667, appeared at the mouth of the Thames. There he detached seventeen ships and sent them, under De Witt, up the river. They captured Sheerness on July 10th, and, passing up the Medway, destroyed three men-of-war. Penetrating still further, they forced their way to Upnor Castle, and on July 13th they burnt three more ships of the line. A frightful panic seized London, and it was feared the next tide would bring the invaders into the City, which was practically defenceless. Thirteen large ships were sunk in the river to bar their progress off Woolwich and Blackwall. The train-bands were called out, and an army of 120,000 was raised in the country. The Dutch, however, carried no army, and made no attempt to land or to come nearer London than Tilbury. After attempts upon Portsmouth and Plymouth, they sailed home, and the matter was speedily forgotten on the signing of the Treaty of Peace.

Monmouth's Invasion.

The first months of the reign of James II. saw two invasions, which, however, can scarcely be called foreign. The Duke of Monmouth, the handsome and princely son of Charles II. by Lucy Walters, determined to attempt to seize the Crown, counting upon the Protestant party of England rising in his favour against the Catholic King. He was



PHILIP II., KING OF SPAIN.

Despatched a force of Spaniards and Italians, which landed at Smerthwick, in Ireland, in 1579, and in 1580 he and Pope Gregory XIII. landed at Smerthwick a larger expedition of 8,000 soldiers. His Armada routed in 1588,



CHARLES II.

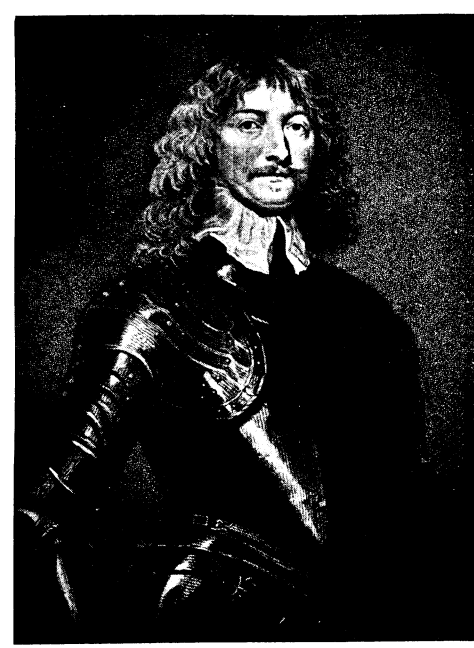
Landed at the mouth of the Spey, Scotland, with the Dutch fleet, in 1650. Crowned King at Scone. Defeated at the battle of Worcester; escaped to France.

assisted by Argyll, who, it was arranged, should land in Scotland while Monmouth should land in the south. Argyll landed in June. Many of his clansmen joined his standard, and he soon had an army of 6,000 men, but, owing in great measure to the committee who had been sent to control him, things were greatly mismanaged and he was easily defeated; being taken prisoner, he was promptly executed at Edinburgh. Meanwhile Monmouth landed at Lyme, in Dorset, and the people flocked to his standard. On July 6th he attacked the King's forces at Sedgemoor, and was completely defeated and fled for his life to Hampshire. Here he was captured, hiding in a ditch with his pocket full of raw peas, his only sustenance for some days, and was brought to London. Although he had no intention of pardoning him, James II. granted him an interview. The miserable Monmouth, with his hands tied behind his back by a silken cord, threw himself on his knees and crawled to the King's feet; but James was unmoved, and Monmouth was executed. His death was followed by Judge Jeffries's "Bloody Assize," during which 330 of Monmouth's supporters were hanged and 840 sold as slaves.

A Baby Causes Invasion.

James II.'s attempt to govern without Parliament, and to force into prominence and power the Catholic religion, in violation of his coronation oath, produced in the kingdom a state of discontent so great that only the knowledge that the King was approaching sixty, and that the next heir, Mary, wife of William, was a Protestant, supplied the people with patience to endure. Suddenly the Queen announced the approaching birth of a child, and the patience of the nation ended. Intrigues, plots, and preparations for bringing William over grew apace.

A good general is a man of business. The same talents are required to manage a commercial undertaking as to control an army. William of Orange, when he arrived in Torbay and landed his businesslike army at Brixham, had forgotten nothing. From his enormous fleet of 600 transports and 53 ships-of-war came not only 13,000 infantry, but cavalry, ample supplies, and paymasters with money to purchase more, travelling forges, and skilled men to mend swords and guns, artillery, and even pontoon bridges with which to cross rivers. His foresight had, moreover, led him, through his agents, to organise in advance support among



JAMES GRAHAM, FIRST EARL OF MONTROSE.

Landed at Orkney, in Scotland, in 1650, where he was defeated and executed.

the disaffected. In consequence, William's task was an easy one. Danby, Lovelace, Norfolk, and even Churchill, deserted James II. and joined the invader, and he entered the palace of Whitehall without an encounter worthy of the name of battle. The Queen, Mary of Modena, on December 9th, 1688, had already fled to France under the protection of that extraordinary Frenchman, De Lauzun. James II., nine days later, left Whitehall to embark at Rochester for France, and on the same day William took possession of his deserted palace.

Within three months of his flight, James landed, on the 12th of March, 1689, in Ireland—the home of lost causes. He brought with him to Kinsale £100,000 in cash, 1,200 Irish refugees, and 100 French officers. All went well for a while; he summoned Parliament in Dublin, created nobles, and raised an army. Then came his attempted siege of Derry, so nobly defended for 105 days by the Protestant boys. Even when reinforced by the arrival in Cork of De Lauzun with 8,000 French troops, his affairs showed no improvement. This extraordinary De Lauzun by sheer audacity and wit had married the cousin of Louis XIV., the greatest heiress in Europe, and, in consequence, had been kept for many years in prison. At last released, he now had succeeded, through the aid of Mary of Modena, in obtaining this Irish command, hoping to regain his former position. No worse general could have been chosen. Ignorant of war, he blindly followed Tyrconnel, hoping thus to hide his deficiency. He was present in July, 1690, when William defeated James at the battle of the Boyne. Gladly would he have gone back to France, when James fled from the Boyne, but he had to stay with his troops. Even he realised the weakness and incompetence of James, which led Sarsfield to exclaim: "Change Kings, and we will fight you over again." On the departure of James, De Lauzun and Tyrconnel retreated to Galway, and were shortly taken off by the French fleet. To their discredit, they refused to join Sarsfield and Boisseleau in the successful defence of Limerick against William and his followers, a performance equalled only by the defence of Derry by the other side in the previous year. The success at Limerick encouraged the French to another effort, and in 1691 St. Ruth landed with fresh forces at Limerick, but St. Ruth had his head removed by a cannon ball at the battle of Aughrim, and the remnant of his army returned to Limerick, which was once more besieged by the Williamites, with whom, at last, the Treaty of Limerick was signed, and the war ended. How disgracefully this treaty was broken it is not our task to tell.

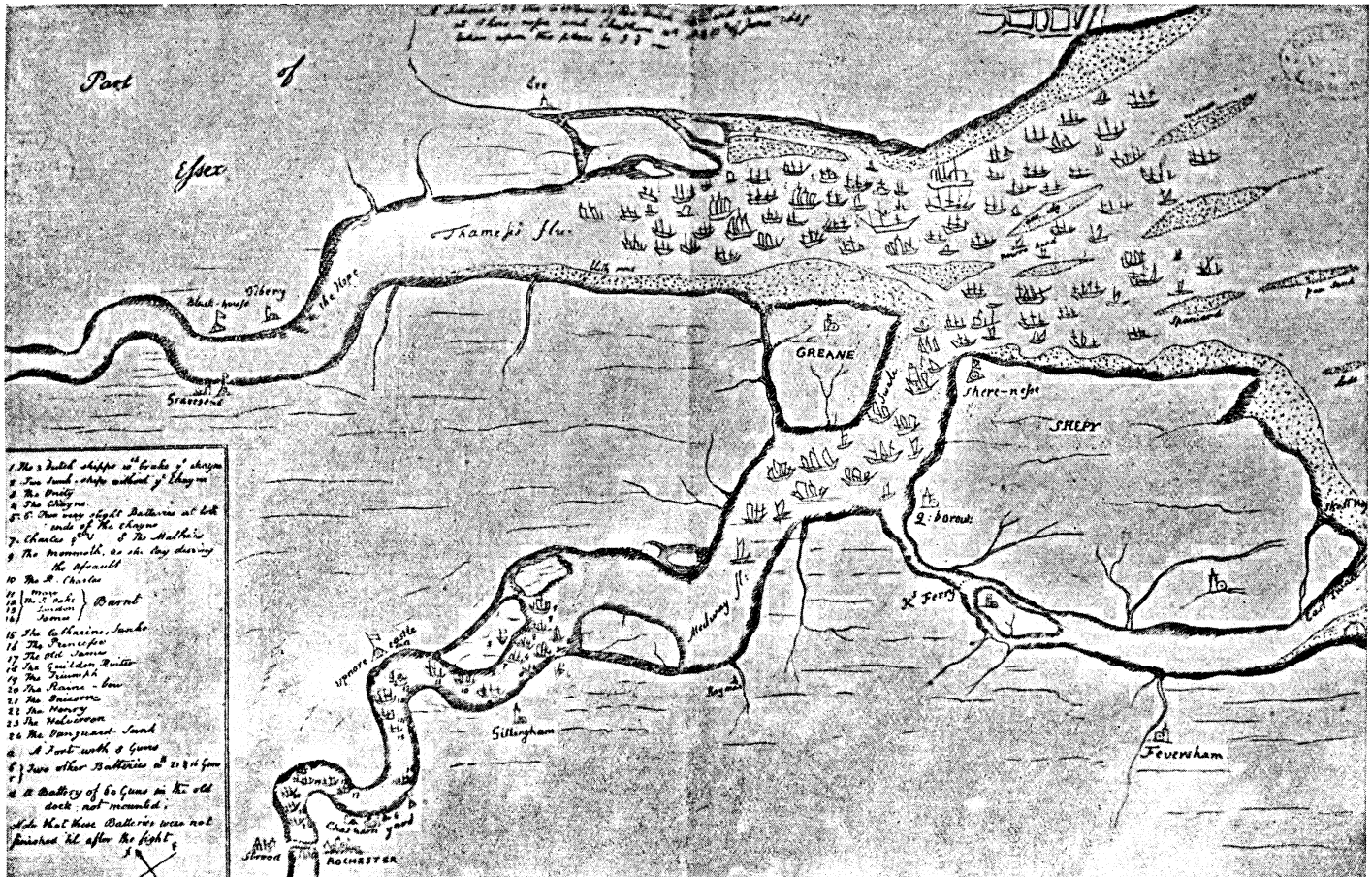


CORNELIUS DE WITT.

In 1667 the Dutch fleet, under De Witt, took Sheerness, sailed up the Thames, burned Chatham Dockyard, and sank several ships-of-war in the Thames. Also in the same year the Dutch fleet attacked Burnt Island, in Fifeshire, Scotland.

The Rowing Boat Invasion.

While William of Orange was busy fighting James II. in Ireland, in 1689, the inhabitants of England suffered a well-founded panic. Admiral de Tourville appeared in the Channel with a fleet of 68 ships and 22 fireships, designed, as was well known, to cover the crossing of an army of invasion of 30,000 men. To oppose De Tourville, England's fleet, even when reinforced by the Dutch, was only 55 ships, under Admiral Lord Torrington. The fleets met opposite the eastern end of the Isle of Wight—the hills of which were crowded by the country-folk eager to watch a great sea-fight. Torrington, however, feeling his marked inferiority, decided to avoid an actual engagement while occupying the attention of the French, and retreated before De Tourville towards Beachy Head. Then Torrington received orders from



FACSIMILE OF JOHN EVELYN'S MS. IN THE PEPYSIAN LIBRARY, SHOWING THE PROGRESS OF THE DUTCH FLEET UP THE THAMES IN 1667.

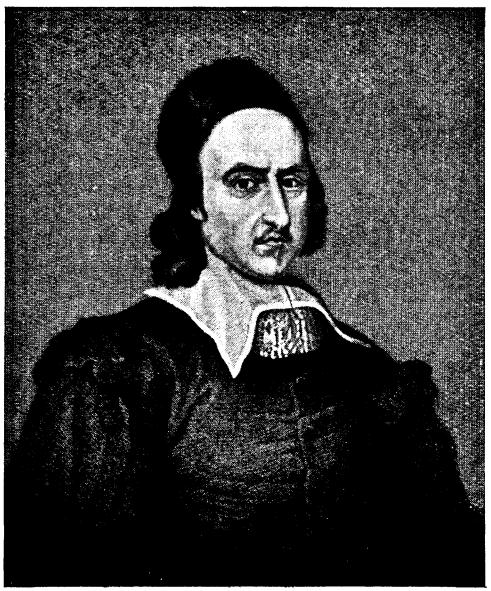
London that he must immediately attack. This he did with a portion of his fleet, reserving a certain number for the ultimate defence of the Thames. As might have been foreseen, he was beaten, and retreated hastily up the Thames. De Tourville now had the Channel at his mercy, and was at liberty to transport his army as and when he liked. The whole country was in a state of agitation. The King and the regular Army were out of the country. The Queen called upon the Lord Mayor of London for assistance, and met with the ready response of £100,000 and 10,000 men. All over the country volunteers were enrolled. Luckily for England, De Tourville neglected his opportunities. He brought his army across, it is true, and in a novel manner. They came in long galleys brought from the Mediterranean, propelled by sixty oars; to work each oar sixty slaves or convicts were employed. After a quiet crossing in calm July weather, the Frenchmen landed at Teignmouth, Devon; but they showed no



JAMES SCOT, DUKE OF MONMOUTH.

Landed at Lyme Regis and attempted to take Bristol with 6,000 men in 1685. Defeated at Sedgemoor and executed.

fight. After ingloriously burning and sacking the village and destroying the church, they, for some inexplicable reason, re-embarked and rowed away without firing a shot. The cautious De Tourville, however, was not to escape a fight; in 1692 a fresh scheme of invasion was matured. The 10,000 Irish soldiers—under their beloved leader, the heroic Sarsfield—who, after the Treaty of Limerick, were allowed to pass over to the service of France and form the celebrated Irish Brigade, were to be carried across the Channel and landed in England.



ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, NINTH EARL OF ARGYLL.

Landed at Cantyre in support of the Duke of Monmouth in 1685.

De Tourville and his fleet were to protect the transports; but, before this could be accomplished, De Tourville was forced to face in fine, though misty, weather, the more powerful English and Dutch combined fleets under Admiral Russell, and received a thorough drubbing in the battle of La Hogue.

Invasion Delayed by Measles.

In 1708, another attempt was made to land a large French force under Fourbin in Scotland, from Ostend. Its departure was delayed for some days by the Pretender catching the measles, and when it did arrive off the mouth of the Firth of Forth, it was met by a superior fleet under Byng, and wisely set sail and returned to Ostend.

The Old Pretender's Invasion.

George I. landed at Greenwich six weeks after the death of Ann. He fell into the hands of his friends, the Whig party, and

under their guidance treated all Tories as enemies of their country. A more conciliatory attitude might have saved much bloodshed, and might have prevented the rebellions of 1715 and of 1745. As it was, George I. refused to receive the homage of the Earl of Mar, who came with a long list of Highland chieftains to tender their support to the new King. Oxford was committed to the Tower, Ormond and Bolingbroke were impeached and fled to the Continent to plot and conspire with the Jacobites. A scheme for a general Stuart insurrection, with the aid of the French, was the result. All hope of real help for the rebels from France soon ended when Louis XIV. died on August 1st, 1715. The Pretender, confident that the whole country would rise in his favour, resolved to act alone, and ordered Mar to raise his standard in Scotland. The Highlanders flocked eagerly



WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

Arrived at Tor Bay, Devon, in 1688, with 600 transports and 50 men-of-war. Entered Exeter with 13,000 men. Afterwards crowned William III.



JAMES II.

Landed at Kinsale with 1,300 French and Irish followers in 1689. Afterwards defeated at the battle of the Boyne.

to Mar's standard, but his incompetence, if not his want of courage, made him incapable of using their support to any purpose, so that when the Pretender arrived at Peterhead, he found nothing but a disorganised and discouraged band near Aberdeen. Well might he exclaim that Mar had invited him to his grave, not to his throne. He landed on December 22nd, and departed with Mar on February 4th, and so ended the invasion.

The Old Pretender, however, made another attempt, this time under Spanish patronage. In March of 1719, a fleet of 25 ships left Cadiz bearing 5,000 soldiers and 30,000 stand of arms, but storm—so often the friend of England—attacked this fleet near Cape Finisterre, and only 300 Spaniards landed in Scotland. They were easily defeated by General Wightman.

Attempt of Bonnie Prince Charlie.

This was the last of the Old Pretender's attempts, but in 1744 the French embarked an army of 15,000 men, under Marshall Saxe and Prince Charles Edward, son of the Old Pretender, and set forth to land on the

coast of Kent and Essex. Everything looked propitious. The English fleet, under Admiral Norris, had been skilfully drawn off by the French Admiral, Roquefeuille, and the passage to England was clear; but, once again, England was saved by the waves. A mighty storm arose and blew for four days, scattering the French transports, who had all to put back, and the expedition was abandoned.

The Invasion of Seven Men.

Early in July, 1745, Prince Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, then aged twenty-five, handsome and engaging, set out from the Loire with two ships, the *Elizabeth* and the *Doutille*, to regain the throne of his ancestors. When but a few days out, he fell in with an English man-of-war, the *Lion*, which engaged the *Elizabeth* and disabled her so that she had to return to France, and the *Doutille* continued on her adventurous way alone to Scotland, reaching the island of North Uist in safety. Seven men only landed with Bonnie Prince



DUC DE LAUZUN.

Landed in Ireland with 7,300 French troops in 1690.

Charlie, yet within a few weeks the Prince had gathered round him an army of 6,000 men, had captured Stirling, Edinburgh, Carlisle, Preston, and Wigan, and had marched to Derby, within 127 miles of London. The capital was in a terrible uproar and panic. The King hurriedly placed his jewels on board ship, and a run commenced upon the Bank of England which nearly broke that institution. It only saved itself through gaining time by paying slowly in sixpences. The Prince Pretender and his supporters had counted upon aid from France and a



THE COMTE DE TOURVILLE,

Whose fleet took and destroyed Teignmouth, Devonshire, in 1690.

rising among the Catholics of Lancashire. From neither direction did any substantial help come, and what little came arrived too late. The invaders retreated in good order to Scotland and there held their own with credit until the fatal day of Culloden which ended the last of the Stuart invasions. The Prince hid for months in the Highlands, attended by the loving devotion of Flora Macdonald, and although a reward of £30,000 was placed upon his head, none betrayed him. He at last escaped to France.

The Seven Years' War.

It is not within the scope of these notes to dwell upon the fascinating history of the Seven Years' War. England entered upon the struggle a weak, second-rate power, and emerged the mistress of the world. Begun over the question of the ownership of a German province, the contest became a world-wide duel which settled the destinies of mankind. It decided that the future of the great continent of North America was to be moulded by the Anglo-Saxons and not by Gallic races. It put an end to the

dream of a French Empire in India, which seemed only too probable, and established beyond further question the supremacy of England in the East. No war brought greater triumphs to England, but few had more disastrous beginnings. Our army,



JAMES FRANCIS STUART, "THE OLD PRETENDER."
Landed at Peterhead in 1715.

under the Duke of Cumberland, fled before the legions of France on the Elbe ; our fleet, under Admiral Byng, retreated before the ships of the Duc de Richelieu off Minorca. Lord Chesterfield cried in despair : "We are no longer a nation." How the nation was lifted from this abyss of disgrace and despair by the inspiring genius of one immortal man, William Pitt (Earl of Chatham), and the conquests of Clive in the Eastern, and Wolfe in the Western world, is a glowing story not for us here to repeat. Our simpler task is to point out that in the course of the war Pitt organised several invasions of France at Rochefort, Cherbourg, and St. Malo. These raids were conceived as diversions to keep the French army in France. Stung by these raids and the success of the allied Prussians and British, France determined upon an invasion of England. Squadrons were prepared at Toulon and Brest, under Admiral Conflans, and also at Dunkirk, under the command of a brave and skilful seaman named Thurot, whose real name is said to have been O'Farrell. On November 14th, 1759, Admiral Conflans put to sea with 24 ships, bent on landing in England. However, on November 20th, off Quiberon, the English fleets under the great Hawke and Duff swept down upon the Frenchmen and annihilated them. Meanwhile Thurot left Dunkirk and, by taking a circuitous route by the shores of Norway and Sweden, arrived at Carrickfergus on February 28th, 1760. He left Dunkirk with 5 ships and 2,000 men, but storms, so often our friends, diminished his fleet, and he arrived in Ireland with only 3 ships and 600 men. He captured the town and castle, but hearing of the defeat of Conflans, he re-embarked his troops and sailed away. He had not sailed far before he fell in with the English fleet. A hot engagement ensued in which Thurot was killed and his ships captured.

Paul Jones.

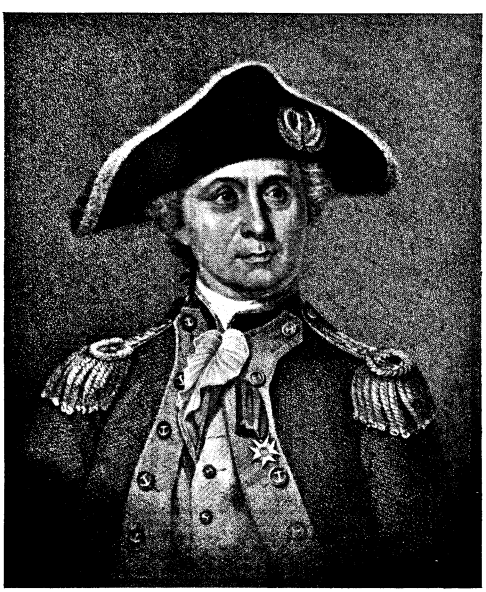
While England was at war in 1775 with her revolted American Colonies whom France and Spain recognised and supported, the two allied Powers attempted an invasion of England with 50,000 men. The English fleet in the Channel was clearly inadequate to cope with the fleet of 66 ships forming the



PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD STUART, "THE YOUNG PRETENDER."
Landed in the Hebrides in 1745, and in the same year a small French force landed at Montrose. The Pretender was victorious at Prestonpans and Falkirk. Finally defeated at Culloden Moor.

combined forces of France and Spain. Fortunately, squabbles broke out between the French and Spanish commanders, and after

cruising up and down they both sailed home discomfited and disgraced. Our national pride, however, was considerably mortified by the daring enterprise of Paul Jones, one of our own flesh and blood. Born at Kirklean, Kirkcudbrightshire, in 1747, he was apprenticed at Whitehaven and at twelve went to sea. In 1773 he settled in Virginia and fought for the Colonies. Holding a commission from the Colonial Government, he sailed for Europe with two ships and obtained a commission from the French. A third ship, the *Bonhomme Richard*, was given him by France, and with this fleet he began his exploits against the land of his birth. He sailed up



JOHN PAUL JONES.

Landed at Whitehaven in 1778. Landed at Kirkcudbright and destroyed the residence of Lord Selkirk, after which he arrived at Carrickfergus. Captured and destroyed the warship "Drake." The next year he attempted Leith.

the Firth of Forth, and Sir Walter Scott in his introduction to "Waverley" recounts the humiliation and panic created by his arrival. A strong west wind, however, blew him out to sea. On his way south he fell in with and captured H.M.S. *Serapis* off Flamborough Head. In April, 1778, he entered Whitehaven and fired the shipping; then, crossing to his native country, he landed at St. Mary's Isle, in Kirkcudbrightshire, and destroyed the house of Lord Selkirk. Crossing to Belfast, he attacked and captured H.M.S. *Drake*, which was stationed in the Lough. He also landed and did damage to the town of Carrickfergus. This adventurous spirit afterwards entered the service of Catherine of Russia in 1788, and was given command in the Black Sea, as rear-admiral, in her war with the Turks. He died in Paris in 1792. As late as 1906 the remains of Paul Jones, "Founder of the United States Navy," were, with great honour, removed from France and reinterred at the Naval Academy, Annapolis. Why he is entitled to be called the founder of the United States Navy it is hard to realise.

Wolfe Tone.

Within the memory of our grandfathers these kingdoms have been saved by the weather from an alarming invasion. This owed its origin to one remarkable man, Wolfe Tone, a young Irish barrister. Having to leave Ireland on account of his revolutionary views, he went first to America and thence to France, determined to induce the Government of that country to invade Ireland. As a result of his persevering efforts, in 1796 a French fleet of 46 ships under General Hoche and General Grouchy set out from Brest, carrying an army of 15,000 men. Fog separated General Hoche from the main body, but no less than 16 ships with 8,000 men reached Bantry Bay, and, in the words of Wolfe Tone, they could have tossed a biscuit on to the shores. But Grouchy hesitated to land; his dilatoriness was as conspicuous at Bantry as it was afterwards at Waterloo. He waited for Hoche for six days, with the result that a storm sprang up and blew his fleet in disorder to sea. Had Grouchy been a little more daring and landed his men, the Irish would have risen, fresh French reinforcements would have arrived, and we certainly should have lost Ireland. Nor did this serious endeavour satisfy Wolfe Tone's unquenchable desire to free his country. After the failure of the Bantry Bay attempt, he became one of the officers attached to another great attack upon our national existence, which again failed owing to the intervention of the elements. In July of 1797, the newly created Batavian Republic, in conjunction with the French, determined upon an invasion. Admiral de Winter assembled at the Texel a fleet of no less than 67 ships, on board which were 16,000 soldiers, under the command of General Daendels. The plan was to make a sudden landing in Ireland. The time was propitious, the mutiny of the Nore was raging, and discontent was rife throughout the British Navy. Admiral Duncan, sent to watch the action of



GENERAL HOCHE.

Entered Bantry Bay with 15,000 French troops in 1796, but did not land.

the Dutch expedition, found himself off Texel with only a few ships. Had a battle then been fought when De Winter was ready to start—namely, on July 8th, 1797—it is certain that Duncan must have been defeated; but the winds once more fought for England, this time by immediately assuming a masterly inactivity—they absolutely refused to blow. Day after day, from July 8th until September 1st, De Winter tried in vain to sail out, only to find there was no wind. The 16,000 men on board the ships ate up all the provisions and had to be disembarked, and meanwhile the mutiny of the English fleet ended and Duncan was reinforced. A little later De Winter sailed out without the soldiers and gave battle to Duncan, who gloriously defeated him at the battle of Camperdown. After the failure of Hoche's Bantry Bay expedition and De Winter's Texel expedition, the indomitable Wolfe Tone induced the French Government to make another attempt. Tone tried to persuade Napoleon Bonaparte to take command, but the great man, after a short consideration, wisely, for his reputation, left the scheme alone. He used the idea, however, as a cover for the preparations for his expedition to Egypt; when these were complete, he suddenly departed to Egypt, leaving the Irish scheme to take care of itself, but, nevertheless, it went forward. The plan this time was not a bad one. It was to despatch, at about the same time, a number of smaller fleets from different ports in France, whose departure would not, perhaps, be noticed; they could attack Ireland at different points, and could effect a junction once they had landed; others were to cause a diversion by attacking England.

England Saved by Women.

The first of these expeditions, in the preparation of which Wolfe Tone took a part, was the invasion of "the Black Legion." "The Black Legion" was a regiment composed of the worst blackguards that could be brought together by searching the prisons and galleys of France—felons, thieves, and murderers who were granted their lives on condition that they joined the Legion. As an outward sign of character the French Government appropriately assigned them a black uniform. The idea was to cast these scoundrels loose on the coasts of England, not with the object of legitimate fighting, but with a view to house destruction and outrage. The hope was that they might burn Bristol and afterwards Liverpool. Wolfe Tone was not particularly proud of this part of the invasion scheme, and had qualms of conscience which he argues down



GROUCHY.

Entered Bantry Bay in 1796 with General Hoche and Wolfe Tone.

in his diary in these words: "For the truth I hate the very name of England . . . . The British burned without mercy in America, they endeavoured to starve 25,000,000 souls in France, and, above all, they are keeping at this moment my country in slavery, my friends in prison, myself in exile. It is these considerations which steel me against horrors which I should otherwise shudder to think of." Had he then known the cruelties with which his enemies suppressed the Irish rebellion when once it did break out, he would have had more substantial "considerations." This expedition of black blackguards landed at Fishguard, in Pembrokeshire, on February 22nd, 1797. They were under the command of an American soldier of fortune, named Tate, serving in the French Army. In all 1,400 men landed and began to plunder. The militia under Lord Cawdor was quickly called out, but the desperadoes showed no fight or courage; they at once began negotiations and surrendered to Lord Cawdor, whose force was considerably inferior both in numbers and equipment. It is said that Tate was deceived about the numbers opposed to him by seeing in all directions red coats, which he took for regular troops, moving about the hills. The red coats, however, were merely the red cloaks worn by the Welsh countrywomen as part of their national dress.



THEOBALD WOLFE TONE.

With Generals Hoche and Grouchy, entered Bantry Bay with 15,000 French troops in 1796, but did not land. In 1798, Wolfe Tone and General Hardie, with a large body of French troops, arrived at Loch Swilly, and were defeated in an engagement with Admiral Warren.



JAMES NAPPER TANDY.

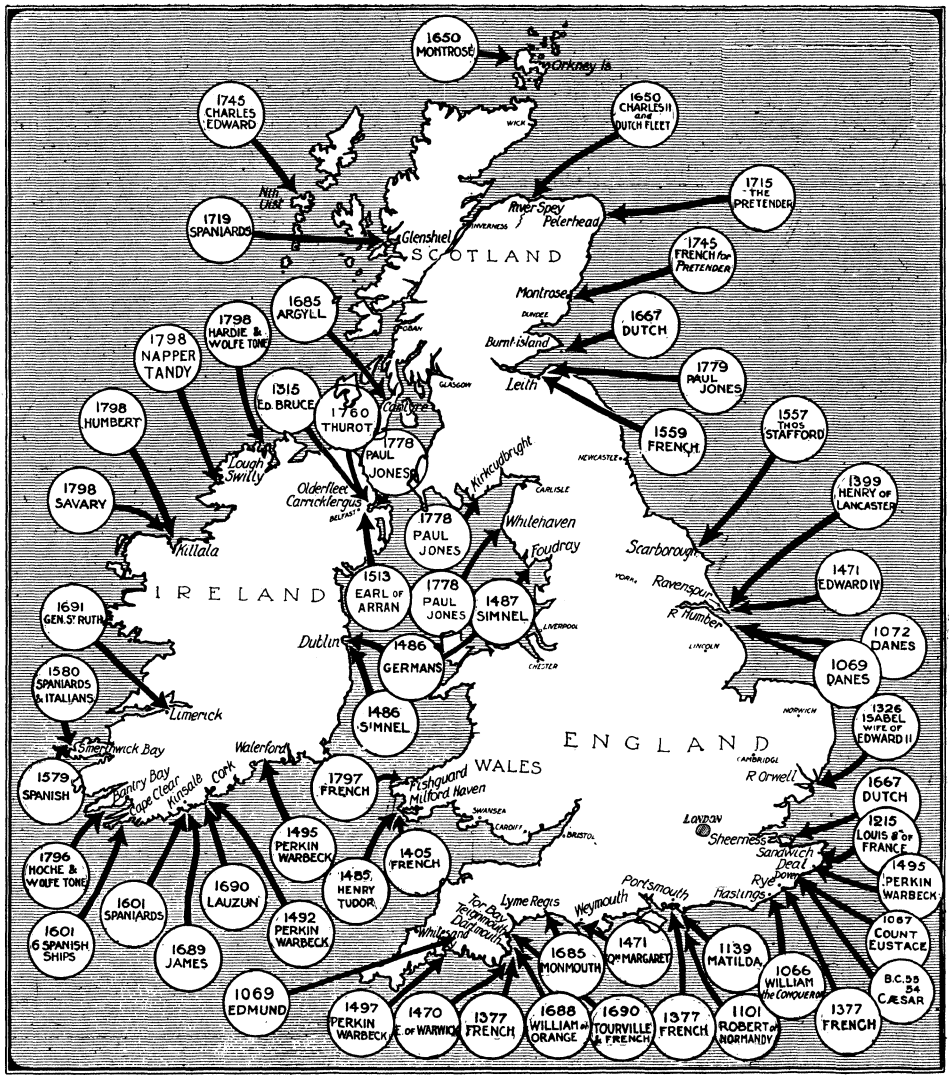
Landed at Arran and again at Rathlin in 1798.

FRENCH MARCH THROUGH IRELAND.

The next expedition did not start until August, 1798. It came from Rochelle under General Humbert, accompanied by Wolfe Tone's brother, Mathew Tone. Humbert had been waiting impatiently for months for orders and supplies which did not arrive from Paris. At last he daringly raised money from the merchants of Rochelle and embarked 1,000 men and started off on his own account. He successfully effected a landing at Killala, and was immediately joined by a number of the Irish peasantry, whom he tried to drill into soldiers. Of the dash and bravery of Humbert and his small army there is no doubt; by a sudden movement they attacked the town of Castlebar, then held by General Lake and 5,000 men, whom they drove out in a panic. Proceeding further south, however, the invaders were at last forced to capitulate to Lord Cornwallis, with a force of 20,000 men, at Ballinamuck. Wolfe Tone's young brother and a companion named Teeling were arrested and executed, while the gallant Frenchmen were allowed to return to France with all the honours of war.

Thomas de Quincey in his autobiography gives an interesting account of this invasion, from inquiries he made upon the spot a few months after the event.

A few days after Humbert's defeat on September 10th, 1798, a curious invader, sailing from Dunkirk in the brig *Anacreon*,



MAP SHOWING THE LOCALITIES OF FORMER LANDINGS OF FOREIGN TROOPS IN THE BRITISH ISLANDS.

made two hurried landings and departures on the northern coast, first at Arran, off Donegal, and then at Rathlin — Napper Tandy—an odd character to whom it is difficult to assign a proper place in Irish history. He was a Dublin draper who became a patriot and had, like the rest, to fly the country to escape the gallows. Sincerity and honesty were in him mixed with a certain grotesque swagger which caused his name to be always mentioned with a smile. But that name will not die so long as "The Wearing of the Green" is sung.

I met with Napper Tandy,
And he took me by the hand,
Says he, "How is old Ireland,
And how does she stand?"

She's the most distressful country
That ever yet was seen,
For they're hanging men and women
For the wearing of the green.

Napper Tandy did not effect very much; he seized a local post-office, and, the English fleet being reported, he sailed away to Norway and thence back to the Continent.

Wolfe Tone Captured.

Meanwhile, Wolfe Tone was at Brest, fretting his soul away at the delays and unbusinesslike way the affair was being managed. Through all these delays he went through the agony of seeing the Irish rebellion (which the skill of the English Government had forced prematurely to a

head) suppressed with unheard of severity and cruelty. The French Government, instead of making simultaneous landings of large bodies, were only attempting disconnected attacks on a small scale. But Tone had always said that if the French Government only sent a corporal's guard, he would accompany it. So, when, on the receipt of the news of Humbert's landing, a further division was hurriedly prepared and despatched on September 20th, 1798, from the Bay of Camaret, under General Hardy, Wolfe Tone eagerly joined it. It consisted of ten ships, carrying 3,000 men. The elements, once more coming to the assistance of Britain, scattered the fleet, and when, on October 10th, Hardy and Tone reached Loch Swilly, only four ships remained—the *Hoche*, *Loire*, *Resolve*, and *Biche*. Their arrival was immediately signalled round the coast, and Admiral Warren, with six ships of the line, was down upon them the next morning.

The *Hoche*, bearing Hardy and Tone on board, was surrounded by four ships of the line; she sustained their fire till her masts and rigging were swept away, her scuppers flowed with blood, her wounded filled the cockpits, her rudder was carried away, five feet of water filled her hold, and she floated a dismantled wreck. Tone commanded a battery and fought throughout the action with the desperation of a man courting death. At length the *Hoche* struck, and Tone was, with the other officers, made prisoner of war.

A few days after landing, however, Wolfe Tone was recognised and immediately arrested as a felon and sent fettered and on horseback under an escort of dragoons to Dublin. There, although the ordinary courts were sitting, he was tried by court-martial and sentenced to be hanged in forty-eight hours, in spite of his appeal to be shot as a soldier. To the last he breathed defiance. Addressing his military judges, he said: "From my earliest youth I have regarded the connection between Ireland and Great Britain as the curse of the Irish nation. . . . I designed by fair and open war to procure the separation of the two countries. . . . In a cause like this success is everything. Success in the eyes of the vulgar fixes merit. Washington succeeded and Kosciusko failed." This illegal and hurried trial aroused the public sense of justice, and the great lawyer and orator, Curran, on November 12th, accompanied by Tone's aged father, appeared before the Chief Justice Lord Kilwarden and, setting out the illegality of the proceedings, asked for a writ of Habeas Corpus.

The Chief Justice: Have a writ instantly prepared.

Curran: My lord, my client may die while the writ is preparing.

The Chief Justice: Mr. Sheriff, proceed to the barracks and see that Tone is not executed.

The court waited in agitated suspense. The sheriff speedily appeared and informed the court that the military authorities refused to obey the order of the court.

The Chief Justice: Mr. Sheriff, proceed to the barracks, arrest the Provost Marshal and Major Sandys, and take Wolfe Tone into your custody.

Again an interval of suspense—not a long one, however—and "Mr. Sheriff" once more appeared before the Chief Justice to inform him that Wolfe Tone was now beyond the reach of all human tribunals, civil or military. Rather than submit to the degradation of a felon's death, he had committed suicide in his prison cell.

So died the latest of Britain's invaders. "Wolfe Tone," says the Duke of Wellington, "was a most extraordinary man, and his history is the most curious of those times. With a hundred guineas in his pocket, unknown and unrecommended, he went to Paris in order to overturn the British Government . . . the Bantry Bay expedition was the result. For the failure of that expedition Tone was not responsible. He organised victory; an incompetent French general contrived defeat."

We may end our account of the most recent of Britain's invaders in the words of Professor Goldwin Smith: "Though his name is little known among Englishmen, he, brave, adventurous, sanguine, fertile in resource, buoyant under misfortune, was near being as fatal an enemy to England as Hannibal was to Rome."

In the foregoing recapitulation of the many occasions on which invading forces have landed on British shores in the past history of our country, the more epoch-making invasions such as those of the Romans, the Saxons, and the Normans, and the more famous attacks such as those of Philip of Spain, have been but briefly recalled, as matters of general knowledge. More space has been given to the many curious points of interest connected with invading forces which have not left as memorable a mark in the records of their period, although some of them might have altered history had they been successful.

WHITE WALLS.

By MAX PEMBERTON.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—On her twenty-first birthday the Countess Ulusia, sole heiress of the lords of Rabka, becomes in her own right the richest woman in Austria, and is escorted home from a convent school near Vienna—where she has spent the past fifteen years of her life—by her uncle, a bishop, and Count Rudolph of Trieste, who has managed the vast salt-mines of her ancestral estates during her minority. Count Rudolph has made up his mind to marry the heiress, but she has already gathered vaguely that he has cruelly oppressed the downtrodden populace that toils in her vast, subterranean salt-mines, and she is determined not only to exact an account of his stewardship, but to judge for herself of its wisdom and its humanity. She receives a picturesque welcome from the rough masses in her strange kingdom in the underworld, but soon realises that oppression has brought about a state of ferment bordering on insurrection. The more violent of the rebellious spirits are for throwing off all authority, even if it entails the killing not only of Count Rudolph, but of the young mistress in whose name they are harshly ruled. But Jura the Wise, a young man of unknown parentage, but a born leader of men, is sent by the aged Anna, "the Witch," by a secret passage from the mines to the Castle, with this command: "If she be our enemy, kill her as the people wish; if she be a friend, save her and show her to the people."

CHAPTER VI.

A RUNG IN THE LADDER OF LIFE.



E wore the fine clothes, green and gold and braided, the Little Mother had given him, and the golden rose was pinned to his breast. The hour was that of twilight, the day a Sunday, when Jura the Wise set out from the labyrinth which had been his prison.

And first he quitted the great cave wherein the Monk Arthur had taught him all he knew of life, and Anna, whom men called the Witch, had put this oath upon him—

"Swear to me, Jura, son, that Rabka shall hold you prisoner until your hour comes."

And he swore the oath because of his love of her and of his sure knowledge that the things of which she spoke were holy as the mysteries.

The hour had come, and Jura was to go go forth. The strange clothes which he wore, the golden rose upon his breast, did not embarrass him. He sought the river-bank again, and, swinging his lantern above the water, caught shadows of a giant's figure and a soldier's gait. And he was free, free; the black water shut him off no longer from the earth he coveted; the mighty rock should stand no more between him and the life-giving sun. He was free: the chains had fallen from his limbs, and his eyes might look up.

He stood a little while at the water's edge; then, plunging into the crevice of the chasm, he followed a winding passage of the rock for the third part of a mile, and so came out at last at the foot of an ancient stairway, long forgotten and disused, and littered with the rubble of the years. He had often climbed this in the days of his childhood, but never beyond the second stage. The oath forbade; the hour had not yet come. To-night it was at hand, and he might go forth with a hope and expectation of the unknown world passing all belief.

There were mighty workings in the eastern galleries, but Rabka had long forgotten them. Some of these in the upper storeys were near the home of bear and wolf and of the great vampire bat which terrified the people. Jura was afraid of no living thing, and he passed through the forsaken halls with the sure step and the concentrated gaze of a man who seeks a goal and will not be turned from it. And this endured until he came to the last of the galleries and a sudden draught of the colder air set him shivering as a man with the ague.

They had told him of heat and cold; the Monk Arthur had spoken of summer and of winter; of the golden corn and the frozen field—but until this night Jura the Wise had made little of his meaning. Then, in a flash, understanding came, and with it fear. This rushing wind, how if it caught him in its arms and bore him downward? He recalled the traditions of storm and tempest, and stood aghast at them. They had given him no armour against this. Crouching by the wall, he waited a little while to see if the blast would shake him again—but it fell soft afterwards as a tide that is ebbing, and his courage returned.

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He was a fool to be afraid. Would the Little Mother have let him go if this were the peril? Had she not assured him that no harm would befall him either at Rabka or its Castle? The thought inspired him to new effort. He climbed the last of the stairs as fast as his beating heart would permit, and running at last down a long gallery, he burst out upon the mountainside and there fell upon his knees before the God who had revealed such a wondrous scene to his ravished eyes.

Wise, in truth, had the Little Mother been to send her son forth by night and not by day. He, who was of the world and yet a stranger to it, would never have dared to lift his eyes to the glory of the morning sun or the splendour of the noonday. But this scene of night at her zenith bewitched him.

Ah, the majesty of the moonlit mountains to which the steps had carried him, the silvery beams of light playing upon crag and chasm, and far below the vast, silent plain, the unruffled waters of the river, and the distant lights of the town where so many of the workers lived! And he was carried up to those heights as his Master, the Christ, before him—the whole known world seemed to lie at his feet. He was master, and the people but his servants.

Such were the vague and wild thoughts which rushed tumultuously upon this awakened brain as Jura knelt upon the frozen earth and bowed his head in adoration. A fever of the revelation forbade him to feel the bite of the wind or the breath of the frost. All things were new to him. He espied the black stems of pine trees and tried to liken them to the trees of his books, whereon the leaves were painted. He saw a village church far below in the hollow, and made little of its shape, nor understood why it did not fall. The great arc of the infinite heavens appalled him by the majesty of stars. He had the desire to be lifted up far above the world, beyond all fear of the mine and the darkness. He desired the knowledge of God in an ecstasy of the spirit passing all understanding.

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A chime in the clock tower of the Castle recalled Jura from his reverie and brought him to earth again. He worshipped the divine, but must serve the human. The task upon which "Little Mother" had sent him was not to be done amid the glories of the mountains, but down there in the woman's home and in the face of those who served her. He did not blame himself for his delay; but as a child who remembers the schoolhouse door, he went laggingly upon his way, turning often to look up to the heights, and quitting them as one who would return again. Anon he found himself upon a narrow goat-path which sloped in quick descent towards the valley. He followed it and came out upon a high road, and perceived the Castle lights not half a mile from the place where he stood.

He was to go there, Mother Anna had said, and to show himself to Martin, the keeper of the gate. To him he would say that he must speak to the Countess alone. Very frankly the old woman had warned him that this course might be attended by grave perils. "But heed them not," she had said, "for I am watching over you." What this might mean he could not tell; but his faith in the Little Mother sufficed for all doubts, and he went straight on as though to a star that beckoned him, until he came to the outer gate of the Castle and to the lodge where dwelt Martin, the keeper.

A young lad answered his knock, and in reply to a question said that old Martin was at his supper and could not be disturbed. This, however, was before the light showed him the fine habit and the gold braiding upon the shoulders; but directly he perceived them, he saluted bravely and promised that his Excellency should be attended to at once. A moment later old Martin came out of the house, lantern in hand, and bade the stranger follow him into the shelter of the gateway.

"To see his Excellency the Count Rudolph?" he said, as they went. Jura answered quite simply: "No, Martin Dorner, to see the Countess, alone."

"Then you are from Vienna, sir?"

"Nothing of the sort, old Martin. I come from your dead master, Philip, whom you called the Wise."

Martin Dorner was a very old man, tottering and feeble, and grown grey in the service; but he squared his shoulders at these words and looked the stranger full in the face.

"From my dead master, sir—you!"

"As I say, old Martin. Lift your lantern and look at me."

The old man obeyed, his hands trembling as he raised the lantern. What message was this? what fulfilment of the prophecy which had been uttered in the darkness of Rabka a score of years?

"Do you know me now, old Martin?"

"I know you, Excellency. God help me, I know you!"

"Then do my bidding as I command you. I must see the Countess alone."

"It is impossible, Excellency."

"Is it impossible to him who comes in Philip's name?"

"His son lies in the altar tomb—who may speak for the lord Count who is dead?"

"The golden rose shall speak, Martin—let your lantern discover it—it is here, old Martin."

The keeper stretched out a trembling finger and touched the petals of the rose one by one—lifted his lantern anew, and searched every feature of the man's strong face. Then, with an exclamation which was almost a cry, he unbarred the gate.

"I will do your bidding," he said. "My son shall take you to her Excellency."

CHAPTER VII.

THE INTERVIEW.

MARTIN'S son, young Franz, the Major Domo of the Castle, conducted Jura up a wide flight of stairs and left him in a little boudoir upon the first floor. This room was lighted by electric lamps beneath shades of a soft rose tint, and its dainty furniture had come from Paris. The pictures on the walls were by famous French and Italian painters; the books were bound in vellum. The story went that it had been a room sacred to Fransisca, the wife of the great Count Philip the Wise, and that its ornament had been little changed since her death.

Jura knew nothing of this, but his heart beat faster when he entered the room, and many new emotions troubled his already agitated brain. Those were chiefly of familiarity and the sense of foreknowledge which sent him to this apartment as by right and compelled the conviction that days of his life had been lived here before. Natural astonishment at the beauty of the furniture was not absent, nor some apprehension at its frailty. He touched the fine things with extended fingers, delighted at their smoothness; he set his feet upon the velvet-pile carpet lightly, as though afraid his tread would injure it. But the electric lamps were no surprise to him, for there were thousands of these in the mines at Rabka, and he had seen beautiful things in Mother Anna's home below the earth.

This spell of wonder concerning the scene gave place quickly to another concerning its people. He had come to the Castle to judge its mistress, as the Little Mother commanded him, to ascertain how far she was responsible for the people's wrongs; and if the responsibility were brought home to her, to kill her in the name of Rabka's freedom. This he would have done without compunction. The primitive faiths of a primitive people were left untouched by Monk Arthur's doctrine. Jura's creed was that of the great Galician nobles of fifty years ago—he knew nothing of any *via media* or of the persuasive gifts. For the friend, life—for the enemy, death. This was the gospel of the labyrinth.

Ten minutes, perhaps, he waited, his eyes roving from the painted ceiling above to the flaring yellow carpet below. Then the door of the boudoir opened suddenly and Ulusia stood before him.

She wore a gown of lace, cut low at the neck, and her jewels were pearls and diamonds. The rustle of her skirt alone announced her coming, for her white satin shoes fell noiselessly upon the carpet, and she did not speak. The man, in his turn, was conscious of an almost overpowering odour of sweet scents, and upon that of new sense of revelation, as though the wall had opened and shown him a vision such as the Monk Arthur would see in his ecstasies. Surely this woman was sent by the Mother of God. For an instant he had the impulse to bend the knee in worship; but when at last she spoke, her voice recalled him instantly to earth, and he was the Jura of the Island.

"You wish to see me, sir?" she began a little timidly. He raised his head and looked at her.

"I wish to see you, Countess, yes . . ."

"Oh!" she cried, recognising him at once, "but you are the miner they call Jura the Wise! I saw you on the Day of Thanksgiving, did I not?"

"You saw me then, Countess."

"And now—— But what does it all mean, why do you wear these clothes? How did you come here?"

Mother Anna had told him that these questions would be asked, and he answered them at once.

"I come to you, lady, in the name of your great ancestor, Philip the Wise, and in his name to judge you."

"To judge me"—her eyes flashed. "What insolence! Do you not know that I could have you flogged for this?"

"I know it very well. While you found

servants to obey you, that would be possible; but it would also be very foolish, since that would be the last command you would ever give at Rabka!"

"Oh, you threaten me, then? Had I not better summon my servants at once?"

"If it please you to do so, Countess, and you do not wish to hear me."

She crossed the room to the fireplace, by which there hung a white bell-rope with a gold tassel. This her hand touched, while her flushed cheek and her rapid breathing testified to her anger.

"You are certainly mad!" she exclaimed—but she did not ring the bell. "You are mad to come here at all."

"And mad also, Countess, to offer you the golden rose worn by Philip's wife, the lady Fransisca."

He unpinned the ornament from his breast and laid it upon the table.

"Our Holy Father the Pope," he said, "sent that as a gift to the Lady Fransisca thirty-five years ago. I see that you are worthy to wear it in her name. Let it be yours, then, until another shall establish a better claim."

She let the bell-rope go and advanced to the table. Her face was quite white and her eyes alight with curiosity; but common prudence remained to her and a shrewd instinct which nothing could abate.

"Who are you, to possess these things?" she said. "How did you get this ornament?"

"By a right none may dispute, but I do not choose to tell you what it is."

"But they will make you tell them—others will ask you the question. Do you not know that Count Rudolph is master here?"

"If that is so, you have told me all that I wish to learn. He, then, is responsible for what has been done at Rabka since you came here."

"If anything has been done."

"In your name, Countess."

She thought upon it an instant and then seated herself at the table.

"You come to speak to me of the people's grievances?"

"Of more than that—of revolution and of danger."

"Then something has been done in my name. What is it?"

"The police are visiting the people's houses to take their children from them. The old right of Parliament is being denied to us. There is a new scale of fine and punishment, and the people will not suffer it. Let me warn you—this is done in your name. If it is not by your will, I will tell the people so."

"And then?"

"They will punish the person responsible."

"Your object, then, in coming here was to be of service to me?"

"To judge you—to blame or praise as the occasion demanded. I find you innocent of the charge. I am glad that it should be so."

"And if you had found me guilty?"

His embarrassment was not to be hidden.

"Heaven knows then; you are but a child," he said.

She laughed at this, but with the sense that she would have wished him to have spoken otherwise. Whatever her answer would have been, however, it remained unspoken, for the door opened at the moment, and Count Rudolph, with Wasyl, the Chief of the Police of Rabka, entered unceremoniously.

"There is the man," said the Count, pointing a finger at Jura. "Arrest him!"

CHAPTER VIII.

ARREST.

WASYL, the Captain of the Police, took a step forward and looked very hard at Jura.

"Why, this is the old woman Anna's son," said he—and then to Jura himself: "Come, my fine fellow, what are you doing here?"

"My business is with her Excellency."

"A fine story—how did you get admission to the house?"

"I came by the gate and will go home by the same road."

"Do you know that you can be punished for this?"

"If her Excellency pleases."

He turned and waited for Ulusia to speak. She had grown very pale and her lips quivered. Count Rudolph meanwhile could not take his eyes from the miner's face. It was as though he had seen a ghost. The Chief of the Police plainly waited for him to speak. He paid no attention to Ulusia.

"Well, Count, and what do you wish me to do?"

"You will arrest this man and hold him a prisoner until I have questioned him. He must answer for this masquerade. You admit that his presence here is open to suspicion. Look at his dress. The clothes he wears are not his own—they have been stolen."



"'There is the man. Arrest him!'"

"It is a lie, Count Rudolph!"

"Then you will convince the judge of that. Let him be arrested, Wasyl."

The Captain of the Police turned towards the door to summon his men. It was then that Ulusia spoke.

"No, no!" she cried with unusual vehemence. "I will not have this man arrested!"

"Excellency, you heard the Count."

"By what right does he give orders in my house?"

"My dear lady, have you considered the alternative? Do you wish to receive any scoundrel who forces his way into your private apartments?"

"That is my business, Count. When I ask your advice, it will be time enough to give it. This man will go as he came. I believe him to be honest."

"I cannot understand it, Countess—a mere workman."

"You know that he is not that, Count."

She faced him boldly now, and he flinched from her attack. Whatever the reason, Rudolph was much agitated by this discovery and had no art to conceal what he felt. Possibly he knew the truth at which Ulusia had not even made a guess. His pretending compliance was an afterthought, inspired by the idea that this was neither the hour nor the place of reckoning.

"Very well," he said at last; "the police, then, will conduct him to his house—if that is your wish."

"It is my wish that he goes alone."

"So be it, then. But you are prepared for the consequences, Countess?"

"I am prepared for the consequences, Count."

She turned to Jura and held out her hand, and he, with an inherited instinct for the grand manner, stooped and kissed it.

"You are wise to act as you have done," he exclaimed quite naturally. "These men here are foolish, and must answer to the people. I will see that they do so; but you, Countess, you will find the people your friend."

He turned upon his heel and left the room. There were two of the household police in the great stone corridor outside, but they, failing to recognise one of the "black gallery" people in the presence of this fine man with the courtier's clothes, saluted him and permitted him to go upon his way. So he returned to Martin the gatekeeper, much to that worthy's amazement.

"Look to yourself," that old fellow stammered; "the police are after you, Excellency. If you have come, as I suppose, to tell them——"

"I come to tell them nothing, Martin."

"Then the hour is not yet?"

"It is not yet, Martin."

"God guard you, wherever you may be, Excellency. I have always known you would return."

Jura made no answer to this. Let it be said that he knew little of a truth which this old man perceived and Rudolph of Trieste had apprehended. Mother Anna's words had been enigmatical. He had a destiny: the time would come when he must do a great work for Rabka. All this she had taught him at the monk's bidding; but what was the nature of the mission, or why he had been chosen, she never said. So the faith remained with him without the knowledge. She would protect him, she who was his divinity.

In truth he troubled about the matter very little when he quitted the Castle gate and set out for the mountains. It was the hour of eleven now and the moonlight glorious. Again that vigour of the sweet night air intoxicated him and fired his senses; but it was accompanied now by the vision of the girl who had received him at Rabka, and of her beauty. How dumb and helpless he had felt before her, he who never had cringed to human being in all his life! How white her skin was, what delicate hands she had, how round and supple were her limbs! But chiefly he thought of her womanhood, understanding, perhaps, for the first time since he was born the meaning of the word.

With love as a mere plea for human passion, Jura was quite familiar. The stories of the "black galleries" had been a theme for politicians even in the Parliament at Buda. Well he knew the poor creatures who flitted as vampires about the dark places of the mine—Monk Arthur had taught him to pity and to help them. But here was an aspect of womanhood of which he had never dreamed. And some day, he said, some man would possess Ulusia and call her his wife. The thought troubled him as a madness. He strode up the hillside with firm tread, spurning the snow. He wondered that the Little Mother could so torture him as to send him to that house.

And now he must return to the mines again. A great horror of this fell upon him and fettered his steps. The whole world below, with its darkness, its mysteries, its eternal gloom, how should he suffer it now?

Never during the long years of waiting had he believed it possible thus to abjure his kingdom and dominion; but he would have abjured them freely this night.

Here was something to forbid return. Another, perhaps, would have thought of his own peril and remembered that such a man as Rudolph of Trieste had yet to be dealt with. A child's chivalrous advocacy could be of little service to him to-morrow, when accusation must come. Had he truly been wise or fearful, he would have hastened to the eastern galleries, whither the police would not have dared to follow him. He did not do so, held by the allurements of that scene of night and by the glamour of his thoughts. For how should a man hidden in Rabka's depths hope to see the Lady Ulusia again, and what in life could make amends for such banishment as this? Nay, he halted his steps upon the thought and returned a little way down the path again. The darkness of the hours of dawning found him still in the mountains. He was there when the day shimmered in the Orient, and the rising sun witnessed his abjection.

Now, this was a stupendous hour, and one that few had lived. Jura knew nothing of the day but what the mind pictures had taught him. The world of night had been sympathetic; he understood it and was master of himself. But this—this glory of the East—this majesty of light and life, sweeping the stars from the heavens, firing the mountain peaks with a thousand hues, searching the valleys, discovering the cities—what should he know of this if it were not fear and humiliation? Nay, he stood as one smitten by the judgment—his limbs trembling beneath him, his hands lifted to the sun.

It had not come upon him suddenly. The earliest greys of the dawn discovered him awake and wondering. He watched the light creeping from dome to dome, saw it stealing as the pallor upon a dead man's face, across the untrodden fields of snow; and this, as the books had taught him, was the herald of the day. Its greater miracle lay in the self-revelation it brought. He touched his hands and was amazed to see them so white; bared his arm and felt the skin of it; looked down at his clothes and could not wholly understand the metamorphosis of self, the creation of what had not been yesterday.

And then the sun rose, and the man ceased to think of such things at all, and could but gaze entranced at that ball of golden fire which black night had vomited above the mountains.

Oh, the surpassing revelation of the light—the awe, the fear, the mute worship! He beheld a thousand changing hues upon the face of the snow, and could have cried for very delight of them. The warmth upon his bared arms was as a kiss of passion which a lover might not return. To him, as to the ancients, the sun stood for the Lord God of heaven and of earth. He could have run forward towards it, believing ignorantly that this would bring him nearer to the throne. The aspect of the world below, white and glorious and re-born, seemed to him beyond all the beauties of the fables which the Monk Arthur had taught him. Here was the heaven which the saints depicted—this was the abode not of men, but of spirits. He was conscious of them all about him; the sun had given birth to them.

He lay in profound awe, face downwards to the ground. And so, a little after the hour of eight o'clock, the police, who had been searching the mine all night, came upon him suddenly and threw him to the ground. He did not resist them immediately; but when they carried him back to the old Tower of the Eagles, which lay at the fort of Rabka's Castle, and there locked him in the dungeon of a keep which had stood a thousand years, he uttered a cry so pathetic that even his keepers were touched.

And this was for the Sun God, whom he had found and lost again.

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUESTION.

THEY carried him to the Eagles' Tower of Rabka and left him there until the escort should take him to the town and the judge should try him.

There is quasi-military law in the mine, and by this the question must be judged—whether he had counselled mutiny and had named himself the leader of the rebels. If he were found guilty, his friends would see him no more and his home be the penal settlement.

Meanwhile there was the journey to the court, and so shrewd a man as Rudolph of Trieste knew better than to permit it by day. This fellow was almost a prophet to the people, they would burn and slay to rescue him if the truth of his imprisonment were known. So the edict went that the journey must be by night and stealthily, and mean-

while that the prisoner should lie in the Eagles' Tower, where many a poor wretch had been lashed to death in the forgotten days of darkness, and the rack had burst asunder many a miscreant when there was no law but that of Rabka's prince.

To the Eagles' Tower at midday came Rudolph himself to visit his prisoner.

It was odd that the Count had never feared this man before, but now he feared him with the dread apprehension of one who realised a peril he would not have confessed and was determined to prove it to its depths.

Jura sat upon a low stool when the Count entered; his eyes were fixed upon a narrow window by which the sunbeams came quivering through the air until they seemed to rest upon his face and to set it tingling with delight. Little he cared for bolts or bars while the day was with him and the images of yesterday. Faith showed him the woman's face as that of a Madonna upon a throne. What cared he for liberty while such a vision was his?

"So we have you caged at last, my man."

He looked up and saw the Count watching him with evil eyes. Habit sent him to his feet, but rather as judge than suppliant.

"I do not know what you mean, Lord Count."

"We shall teach you, then—do you not understand that I have the power to send you to Cracow to the judges?"

"You have the power when the people confer it upon you. Until that day, no child is as helpless, Lord Count."

Rudolph did not answer this. He had heard the same thing from the same lips many times before. A greater question remained to be put. He had eyes but for the prisoner's face, ears but for the tone of a voice which seemed to be speaking from the grave.

"You are the son of the woman they call Anna the Witch," he exclaimed presently. "I wish to know the name of your father."

Jura's brow darkened—the veins upon his forehead swelled as a man convulsed by passion and by anger.

"By what right do you put this question to me?"

"By the desire to help you if you have any claim upon those who employ you."'

Jura laughed scornfully.

"You come to me with this lie upon your lips, then—I am to go to Cracow, I am to be helped—is it that I must choose, Lord Count?"

Rudolph turned about and looked him in the face.

"Yes," he said slowly, "that you choose. I am conceding much—your influence with the men, the faith they place in your judgment—these weigh with me. Turn them to my interests and I will make you a captain of the Upper Gallery. Is that a proposition you can understand?"

"I understand it perfectly, Lord Count."

"And you are willing to enter into an understanding with me?"

Jura strode towards him.

"An understanding which shall help you to banish the Lady Ulusia from Rabka."

"I did not say so."

"It lies in your words, Lord Count."

"And if it does . . . what then?"

"You are a very brave man."

"Ah, a compliment!"

"A very brave man to say such things to me, who have it in my power to unish you for them."

Rudolph started back.

"What boasting is this?" he cried. "Do you not know that the law permits me to flog you for such a threat as that?"

"It does not permit you, Lord Count, or you would have done it long ago. Nevertheless, if you will bring in your whips——"

"You shall go to Cracow. We will hear what they will say to you there——"

"If the people permit it—I have said so before." He folded his arms, an habitual gesture, and waited for the other to speak. But Rudolph quitted the cell abruptly, his question unanswered, his purpose unfulfilled.

And yet in a measure he had succeeded—for had not this man been unable to say whose son he was, and had not the very question put him to shame?

Rudolph resolved to send him that night to Cracow upon a charge of insubordination and mutiny. It seemed to him that he might yet escape the peril he had associated with the name of Jura the Wise, but he knew that he must act secretly and swiftly, or all might be lost.

CHAPTER X.

ULUSIA GOES TO THE EAGLES' TOWER.

It would have been about six o'clock of the day when the door of Jura's cell opened for the second time and Ulusia entered. Franz, old Martin's son, had carried the news to her that the people's ambassador had been arrested at dawn and then lay in the Eagles'



"'But you remain here?'"

Tower. He, also, conducting her by the old cloister which the lords of Rabka had used through the centuries to the gate of the Tower, and speaking a secret word to the sentinels, contrived this interview she desired. She looked a mere child as she entered that gloomy abode—a ray of the golden sunshine searching out a dark place and lighting it with her radiance.

Vienna had gowned her, it is true, but with Vienna's art. Her robe of Murillo's blue had sable upon it, but was a young girl's robe, none the less. She wore no jewels save the gold pins in her hair—a light cloak fell from her shoulders, but did not conceal her shapely figure nor the fine contour of her neck. Chiefly, however, the eyes spoke to the man, those eyes which had searched the mystery yesterday and was here to-day to pursue it still.

She entered the cell with elfish tread, and closing the door swiftly behind her, she faced the prisoner and brought him to his feet. Jura had turned his back upon the window since the Sun god had hidden his face, and was now in a moody reverie which was near to being a dream.

"Sir," she exclaimed, stammering an excuse, "I have come here to learn why they arrested you in my house."

"Yes," he said, with a kindly smile—and then: "I have been waiting for you to come."

Ulusia thrust back the tousled hair from her white forehead with a schoolgirl's gesture and then spoke again, but almost as one who despaired of making herself understood.

"Oh," she said, "if you could tell me! They speak in fables, everyone. I ask a question, and they answer—it will be so when Philip shall come to Rabka again. Here is something to open every door. I pass by your jailers in Philip's name—the name of my uncle who had been dead these twenty years. Cannot you tell me what this means?"

Jura, understanding perfectly that no fable had brought her to the Eagles' Tower, thrust a stool forward and bade her sit.

"These are very ignorant people," he said quietly. "The name of your uncle Philip was rightly held in much esteem among them, for he was the greatest prince that Rabka has ever known. But that was before his wife's death. Reason failed him afterwards when his only son was taken from him, and thereafter your father, his younger brother, ruled. The people did not love him, Countess. Death saved him from a judgment which would have been worse than death—and then the Count of Trieste came to rule us in your name. Are you surprised that the tales should follow—and that there should be some ignorant enough to believe that the great Philip will return—even from the grave?"

She listened patiently, her head buried in her hands.

"Rabka has been my dream," she said at length, "since I was old enough to know anything at all. The Sisters used to show me pictures of the mines and tell me about them. I made up my mind that I would follow in the great Philip's footsteps, child that I was. I thought it would be so easy. And now they tell me that the only wise man here will go to Cracow to-night to stand before the judges. What shall I say to them? What shall I do to help the people?"

"You will see that they have justice—I shall aid you."

"But you—you are a prisoner, and you go to Cracow to-night."

He laughed, and rising upon an impulse, he walked towards the narrow window and gripped the bars of it with giant hands.

"Look," he said, "this is what I do with their locks," and he tore the bars from the rotting mortar as others a reed from a river's bank.

"But thrice a man's height between me and the road where lies liberty—do you speak to me of a prison, Countess?"

"But you remain here—you consent to this?"

He came and stood beside her.

"That I might see you again."

She shivered a little at the words and instinctively drew the cloak about her throat.

"You know that I am quite powerless here," she said; "I am but twenty-one, and Count Rudolph is master of the mine for two years yet."

"Not master for a single day unless I wish it, Countess."

"But you—you—who are you to wish these things?"

"One who can command the people to obedience."

"But what powers—by what right?"

"By the right which superstition ever confers upon good will. They know that I will not betray them. They have never seen me afraid."

"And you are the son of the old woman they call Anna the Witch?"

"It is so, Countess, I am her son."

She sighed, but did not dare to confess her disappointment. Destiny was dealing

strangely with her—saying yesterday: "The world is at your feet," but to-day speaking of coming years of regret and of desire. The mistress of Rabka and this people's son. Oh, impossible, impossible!

"They tell me," she continued presently, "that you are a man of good education—and that you were the pupil of the Monk Arthur, who was banished from Rabka five years ago—is that the truth?"

"It is the truth—to him I owe all that one man can owe to another. But I have repaid, Countess, for I have kept the oath."

"He put that upon you——"

"That I would not leave the mine until the appointed hour should come."

"He named it, then——"

"In prophecy, but not in years. I am content, however, for now I perceive his wisdom. By him my people shall win freedom."

"But are they not free? Do we not live in days of freedom? Who can enslave them while there is the law?"

"The law looks not into the right, Countess. Come with me to the galleries and I will show you such sights that you shall not sleep nor eat because of them."

"I will come," she said; "you shall show me everything—if they do not take you to Cracow."

"And if they do——?"

"I will follow you. I will plead with the judges. They shall hear the truth."

A strange light came into the man's eyes as he heard these words, and acting upon a sudden impulse, he knelt and kissed her hand. She trembled anew at the warm touch of his lips—her whole body quivered, her lips became dry and parched.

"Fear not," he said, "the day of my captivity is not yet. But you, Countess, fear rather for yourself."

"For myself?"

"I have said it. I will go to the people truly, but how if they will not hear me? Oh, I have known it to be so—I have seen their madness; I, Jura, whom all obey. What if they turn from me this night?"

"The soldiers will carry you to Cracow then?"

"I do not fear it. What I fear may not be told to you. This is neither the time nor——"

He stood irresolute, unable to express himself. A heavy step upon the stairs without helped his confusion. Franz, old Martin's son, had come up with grave news.

"Excellency," he said, as he burst in upon them, "the cavalry have ridden in, and the Count is with their officer. You will do well to return with me."

Ulusia knew not what to answer. She stood up on an impulse and searched Jura's face with plaintive eyes. Was he a boaster, then—did the ass bray in the lion's skin?

"They have come for you," she said. He answered with head erect—

"I am ready for them, Countess!"

"Oh!" she exclaimed in a frenzy of passionate disappointment, "have you not shown me the road? Why do you not take it?"

"I wait for the people. Do you not hear them telling me that this is the hour? Return as you came, Countess; I will see you in your own house before the sun shall rise again."

Again he stooped and kissed her hand as one who was bidding her a brief farewell. Afar, through the open lattice, she could hear the murmur of men and the blast of bugles. The sounds waxed and magnified until they came as a tempest's voice moaning and angered above a solitude. There was something awesome in this, and she fled from it, closing her ears as she crossed the cloister, and hardly daring to think about it at all until she found herself in her own room and the door shut upon the sounds. There she would have asked herself many troublesome questions, but for the sudden advent of Count Rudolph and the grave tidings he brought.

"The miners are out," he said, as he entered. "I think you had better leave the place at once."

She laughed, throwing aside her cloak, and not at all unwilling that he should know where she had been.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "a council of prudence! You prefer me in Vienna, Count."

Rudolph was much excited, but he did not abandon that deferential manner which he had adopted towards her since they quitted the convent gate together.

"I might reproach you," he said quickly. "It would be unjust, for the fault lay elsewhere. These people are offered a hundred chances of betterment—schools, doctors, cleanliness, good order—they refuse them. Why? Because they believe that a woman is about to rule over them, and that they can impose upon her. Your father had been wiser to say Vienna, Countess; I see it now."

She laughed, remembering his more tender sentiments.

"Your devotion would have spent itself in trains," she rejoined. "Perhaps my poor father thought of that."

"At least he would say that I have wished to be your friend."

"While the people see in this interloper their enemy. Oh, they'll be grateful enough by and by, Count . . . when the woman has gone. She has her toys to play with . . . are they not saying that in Rabka?"

"They are saying something much more dangerous, dear lady."

"And not far removed from Anna's son . . . I know it; I have just seen him."

"You—have seen him?"

"I am just come from the Eagles' Tower."

"But he is a madman, a fanatic. Were it not for him, there would not be cavalry at Rabka to-night."

"Assuredly, since you send him to Cracow."

"Not so—the magistrates refuse the order. There is no wrong in Galicia to-day, it seems, if you can get people enough to claim a right. Everything is for the working man. The Government is afraid . . . they put the whips in our hands, and strike at us if we use them. This man sets a thousand talking of their grievances, and is not to be punished. Well, where's your law and order, then?"

"Since you are responsible for them, should not I ask you the question, Count? No one could tell me that in Vienna, and I think it must be answered soon."

She bade him listen. The tide of the angry human sea was rising again, and its voice could be heard even here within the Castle walls. "Death to the woman!" the people cried, and upon that uttered the name of Jura the Wise. Well for Ulusia that she heard but indistinctly, as one who listens to the thunder of a tempest from a secure and well-known shelter. The Count, however, guessed the truth. His work had been done too well. The house of a woman's dominion might fall . . . but how if it crushed upon him as it fell, and overwhelmed him in a universal ruin?

"They must be told that Jura is free," he said. "I will go out to them."

And then he said significantly—

"I think it will have to be Vienna to-morrow."

CHAPTER XI.

THE STORM BREAKS.

THE rumour that Jura the Wise had been taken was first bruited in the mines as the men quitted their work at dusk. A woman gave tongue to it—the old White Witch passing from gallery to gallery to tell the story.

And first upon the lake where her son had been master of the boats: "They have taken him!" she cried to those who rowed these black waters—and the cry echoed beneath the great vault of rock as a voice from the caverns of the nether world.

"They have taken him—my son!"

She was a weird figure, Heaven knows, not a little given to dramatic perception, and quite aware of the character the people had given her. Dressed in a flowing robe of dark crimson, her hair matted and unkempt, her eyes blazing, a torch in her hand, she uttered the doleful tidings. The police looked at her askance, unwilling to act. Had not the word gone forth already that the cavalry were sent back? Better not pick the chestnuts from such a fire as this.

And so she went unharmed, and so at her call the pits vomited their dregs of humanity and the dread creatures came forth. Now it would be blear-eyed men, half naked and armed with giant clubs; anon the women of the Black Gallery, dishevelled, drunken and reeling. These called louder than the others for vengeance on Ulusia, and, brandishing their weapons, they pressed upwards, to the stages above where the street was telling of the closing day and many a workman was going to his home.

"They have taken him—my son!"

Even the soberest of those who passed by must listen to this harridan in masquerade. Had not Jura been the chosen ambassador—was he not sent at the wish of them all to see the Countess and bargain with her? So much old Anna had contrived even before she sent her son to Rabka's Castle. The Committee of Union had approved his mission—and now he was taken, the ambassador held hostage, his overtures repulsed. And by a girl of twenty-one who had come to them for the first time, it seemed but yesterday.

They gathered in their groups, discussing it. The Committee, it was said, had already met and sent an ultimatum to Count Rudolph. This and that must be done. He was the master still—why did he permit another to dictate to him? They would stand nothing from the woman. Let her go back to Vienna as she had come. Such was their decree; but while they waited for the answer, the storm broke and carried them upon it as a rushing river bears its wreckage—headlong to the distant and unknown sea.



"'Death to them!'"

Now, old Anna contrived this; hers were the words which fired the people, hers the tongue which drove the rabble upwards as devils from the nether hell to the sleeping world above.

Darkness was but newly fallen when the great white road leading to the Castle gates became black with people. A thousand torches shed their flecks of crimson upon the trampled snow—a thousand fierce oaths were uttered almost at every step. Little these wayfarers cared for any counsels of delay, for Committee's decree or words of prudence. The fever of vengeance possessed them—they were out to burn and slay, and Heaven help those who opposed them!

True, there were obstacles by here and there. Did not the police oppose at the very outset—the Captain of the Guard showing himself with fifty mounted men and seeking to hem the people in? He, be sure, cursed the orders from Vienna and would have strangled the Government which issued them. Just a whiff or two of good powder with a few honest bullets to mark the argument, and there would be an end both of condition and decree.

But Vienna said "No!" Strong measures must not be taken unless the case were desperate. And the Captain knew better than to risk his rank for zeal which Vienna might refuse to justify. For this prudence he paid with his life. A ruffian shot him while he sat and argued with them—and he fell headlong from his horse to the road, where they spurned his body and trampled it. Thereafter nothing forbade. The fifty police, overwhelmed by a torrent, went under in a twinkling and were seen no more. Pistols, knives, clubs were the argument now—you would have needed a battalion to have kept the people back.

From this phalanx of desperadoes, of men whose veins throbbed to the baton of fever, of women whose laughter was the blood cry, the warning went up to the Castle and was heard by Rudolph as he parleyed with Ulusia. When he left her and came out upon the Castle terrace, it seemed to him that the city beneath the earth had given every son she possessed to this assault, and that few of the women could have lagged behind. Standing on a high place of the ramparts, he beheld the coteries of dancing lights below—a white, snow-bound country, but the hither plain now black with people.

Irresistible, as a tempest of the mountains, the miners' army swept on. The shrill, penetrating watchword spoke of death; the hills gave it back in echoes which lingered.

He was afraid now. This man of the subtleties was for subtlety no longer.

By here and there, gathered in little groups upon the wall, were the servants of the Castle, ready to speak plain truths. "Give the prisoner up to them," said Franz, old Martin's son. A lieutenant of police could think of no device less humiliating—and he did not know at that time of his captain's death. When another, more discerning, declared that the Castle could hold out against twenty such mobs as this, Rudolph bit his nails, but did not thank him. He was cursing the hour which brought a woman to Rabka—perhaps thinking of his own folly in playing the game so clumsily.

He should have hastened with a slower step. His love of dominion had brought him to this pass—for he had ruled Rabka so long that the shadow of approaching eclipse was intolerable. A determination to marry Ulusia had been linked to his resolution that, whatever befell, she should never be the mistress of her own. It would all have gone so well but for this mystery of a man come up out of the darkness to thwart him. Who was the fellow, then? Was it possible to believe, as he had believed last night, that the dead Count Philip—but Rudolph thrust that thought aside as incredible.

"We must telegraph to Cracow," he said to Franz. "Let the Government take the responsibility. They have recalled the cavalry. Very well, let them know what is happening, and then hear what they say. Write an urgent message—the miners are in arms, the Castle is besieged. You must spare no words. Our safety lies in it."

The man saluted and went out to do his bidding. There was a telegraph-station within the Castle, and the line ran direct thence to Cracow. There should be cavalry at Rabka again before morning if the wise-acres in authority were not mad. Meanwhile, what mattered the howling of the wolves below? Would not the gate hold? Would it not defy ten times their number? Rudolph had hardly uttered the words when he beheld the mob swarming on the first of the terraces below. And then he perceived that his argument had omitted to reckon with ladders—ladders dragged from the engine-sheds haphazard and set against the giant walls by men who climbed like monkeys.

These were the advance guard, daring

fellows with the hands and feet of apes and the tenacity of the mountain goat. They cared not at all though their comrades fell and lay shattered upon the stone of the *glacis* by the gate. Their goal stood up yonder where the lights twinkled and the servants were huddled in fear. There the woman lived and thence they would drag her. When they had a footing on the wall and could send detachments to the gates, their work was done. By hundreds now the mob entered the Castle grounds and swarmed upwards to the terraces. Flaming torches became as lanterns swinging on the hillside, so that a stranger would have named this a *fête* day and listened for the blare of trumpets. But the music was that of human voices, attuned to the savagery of wolves. They were as wild beasts that hunted, and their prey was a woman.

Such was the mob which climbed at last to the terrace whereon stood Rudolph and the lieutenants of police; and the Count was the first who compelled them to hear any sort of reason. After all, he had not been such a bad master; and if it were true that all their afflictions were to be set down to the woman's influence, well, it remained for them to give him liberty. Meeting him face to face, the leaders lifted their torches aloft and put their demands.

"We are come for our comrade, he whom they name Jura the Wise."

Rudolph stepped forward and tried to assume his old mastery.

"Have you no leaders among you?" he asked; "is the Committee, then, become a rabble? Do you not know that there is a proper way to ask these things? Have I ever forbidden you to come to me with your grievances?"

They admitted the truth of it, and one, a hollow-cheeked man, with the eyes of a ferret, declared that their quarrel was not with the Count.

"If you are our friend," said he, "you will give us back our comrade. Then we will listen to you, but not until then."

Others took it up and spread abroad the impetus of impatience. Let the argument be what it might, they must have their comrade. Foolish to wrangle with a thousand, since no argument could keep that seething rabble back. Let their request be refused, and they would answer for nothing—the very Castle might be burned while they waited. To all of which Rudolph could answer but by exclamation or protest.

Was he the keeper of the Eagles' Tower? Did they expect to find the keys in his hands? This man, this friend of theirs, must he not be taught to behave himself? Harm, however, had not come to him, and he would be sent back to them to-morrow. Further concessions might be granted at the proper time, but for the present he could say but this, that if they would consent to quit the Castle grounds immediately, he would accompany them himself to the Eagles' Tower and set their man free—a sentiment they liked so well that they shouted it a hundred times to those below and set the hillside ringing with it. Jura was to be released!—never did those who clamoured for Barabbas rejoice more fervently.

And now it was a high-strung, joyous rabble, turning from the Castle itself towards the southern ramparts and the Eagles' Tower. Some went singing and dancing as fools to a fair. There were wild lads turning somersaults upon the snow-bound grass and laughing they knew not why. The women went all together, believing that they were helping their husbands and their lovers. But the outposts ran and did not cease to run until they had come to the Tower's foot and touched its tremendous walls with fingers which itched to destroy them.

Now, this Tower lies to the south of the Castle, upon an angle of the rampart which is here thrust far out into the hollow of the mountains. Viewed from the heights, it is seen across the chapel and the stables, a grim, grey building which could tell as fine a tale of human misery as any prison in Galicia. Men, they say, have been bricked into its very walls for the delight of monsters the mediæval age had bred. There are implements of torture dreadful to the mere imagination. Iron Maidens whose spikes close in upon the eyes, the heart, the brain of the victims, machines which tear the flesh from the living body, tortures of fire and water and the rack, harboured to-day that men may speak and think of an age of mercy and thank God that they are not as these ancients.

But to the ignorant of Rabka, the Tower is what it ever was. There, says the multitude, things are done by the police of which none hear, nor any victim is released to tell. The old dread remains and is potent for discipline—though, in truth, it is but a fable, and there is as much justice for these poor miners as for any prince in the proud city of Vienna. But the people will have none of it. They were still the children of an ancient story when they flung themselves

upon those massive walls that night and cried for Jura the Wise to be given back to them. He, surely, had known the torture in those brief hours of captivity; but Heaven witness their vengeance if other harm had befallen him!

It was a moment of intense expectancy, a scene Rabka may not behold again in all its years. The police, supported by those who had derided them, formed a ring of steel about the Tower's gate and thrust the outposts back. Rudolph himself, a fine figure in his coat and cap of fur, and one to please the people, went up with the lieutenants to the Tower's gate and bade the keeper open. A thousand eyes watched him enter the place, a thousand hearts beat high with hope when the wicket was shut behind him and the police closed up before it. Surely now their night's work was done. They would welcome their ambassador as Rabka should welcome him and carry him triumphantly to the depths. Aye, and then what a night in the streets and *cafés* five hundred feet below the ground! Let them wreak their vengeance upon the woman afterwards; their account against her would stand if Jura were free.

So they waited in some patience. What horseplay marked the interlude was kept for the outer circumference of a rabble circle, where youths, caring nothing for principles, became acrobatic in practice, and shrieking harridans made merry in the intervals. The sadness of a great hope seemed of a sudden to affect the people, heretofore the subjects of joy. A mood of silence fell upon the multitude, as though it were awed of its own success. Emotional women wept then and men kissed each other upon the cheeks. Jura was coming out to them! He would speak to the people, his children, and tell them he was free; he would lead them to liberty as he had led them so often! This they said in hushed whispers; but, anon, breaking the unnatural silence, they asked in louder tones: Why did he delay? Was it a trick, then? Ah, here was the Count coming out of the Tower. He would tell them.

There is a little flight of stone steps leading to the door of Rakba's prison, and upon this the Count dwelt awhile as he emerged from the Tower and showed his pale face to the multitude. It was to be observed that the police closed in about him, and that one of the lieutenants drew a pistol from his holster and made a clumsy attempt to shield it in a white gloved hand. The people themselves were so still that they might have been shadows of the night. The moon had risen and shone down upon the scene.

"My friends," said the Count, speaking very slowly, "I cannot release the prisoner, for he is already free."

For a little while no one spoke. Then as a wail from afar a woman's voice was heard crying: "Death to them!"

The threat spread as a story of fire. The Castle of Rabka itself was in flames before the hour had run.

(To be continued.)

SYMPATHY.

A PITIFUL tear is a priceless pearl
And costs us never a groat,
And a kindly word
Is much better heard
Than stuck in a diffident throat.
All ye who frown
On a poor beggar down,
Remember the beam and the mote.

CHARLES J. POPE.



"THE DUCK POND." BY YEEND KING.

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THE QUEST AND CULT OF THE ORCHID.

By W. G. Fitz-Gerald.

Photographs by Jacques Boyer, Paris.

FED by air and not earth, the tropical orchid stands alone among flowers. It is a parasite growing high on the trunks of trees, and guarded by Nature in her most forbidding moods. Its drooping sprays light the dim jungle with glorious and fantastic blooms that mimic radiant birds and gorgeous moths.

Lives as well as fortunes are lost in winning orchids from their wild domain. Falkenberg in Panama, Klaboch in Mexico, Endres on the Rio Hacha, Wallace in Equador, Schroder in Sierra Leone, Arnold on the Orinoco, Digance in Brazil, Brown in Madagascar—all these collectors have met more or less tragic deaths through wild beasts, hostile savages, fevers, and accidents.



ODONTOGLOSSUM CRISPUM.

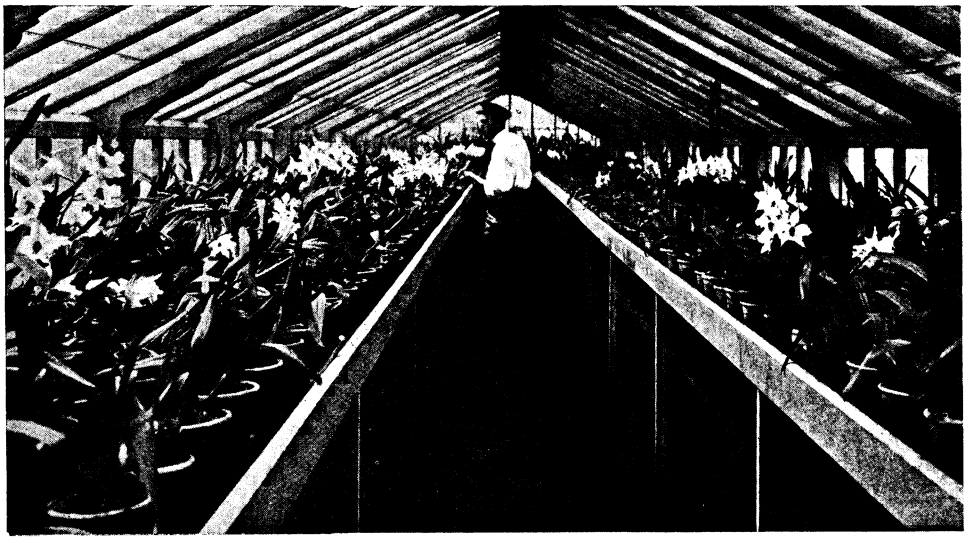
Forty years ago the orchid cult was unknown. Benedict Roezl was perhaps the pioneer hunter. But he worked with little system, and the thousands of plants he sent home, thrown loose into boxes, nearly all died. Yet Roezl made money, and when the wild places had lost their charm, he retired to the old city of Prague, in Bohemia, where at this day will be found a statue to his memory.

The business of sending out orchid collectors is speculative in the highest degree. One man may cost his employer £3,000 a year, and there is no check upon his work. It is no wonder, therefore, that orchid importers on a large scale should be few, even taking the world as a whole. There is one notable importer at St. Albans, another in New Jersey, U.S.A., one in Paris, and a fourth in Berlin. The British firm has some fifteen collectors in the richest fields, which are Mexico, Venezuela, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Colombia, Brazil, Burma; Assam and the Himalayan regions generally; Peru and Bolivia, Borneo, New Guinea, and the Dutch Indies—chiefly Java and Sumatra.

There are many men of great wealth, rank, and fine taste, who are willing to pay remarkable prices for orchids. More than one of the Rothschilds, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Sir Trevor Lawrence, President of the Horticultural Society, Baron Schroeder, and others, think little of the price they pay for a unique specimen.

The discovery of the Elephant Moth is an excellent example of what may be termed the "romance" of orchid-hunting. A German collector, passing up the deadly Fly River in New Guinea, came suddenly upon a Papuan cemetery, where the huge crimson floral "moths" crept and shivered amid the bones and skulls. Enthusiastic, the hunter would have run riot amid the glorious masses, but the savages menaced him with poisoned arrows, held at tense strings. They feared this disturbance of their ancestors' remains.

They were won over, however, by presents of beads, brass wire, and calico, and even assisted in collecting the plants. But, lest the spirits of the dead should resent the disturbance, the savages begged that a quaint little god be taken also by the collector, and



A GREENHOUSE FULL OF ODONTOGLOSSUM.

this idol was sold with the first consignment of Elephant Moth orchids at the auction-rooms of Messrs. Protheroe and Morris in London. The specimen that attracted most attention was a plant, fairly blazing with blooms, that grew out of the eye socket of a human skull. This orchid was sold just as it was for £120.

There is immense range in the size, colouring, fantastic shapes, and fragrance of orchids. Some of them make the air heavy with perfume, while others, like the lovely Cradle orchid, with its curious little "baby" nodding its head inside, simply reek with drug-like odour. Amateurs are much struck by the mimetic power of the orchid, such as the



TRANSPLANTING THE YOUNG SEEDLINGS OF ORCHIDS.

Butterfly, which faithfully represents this insect down to the minutest details of the antennæ.

There are orchids shaped like fanciful gnomes; and long rows of solemn little penguins, absurdly like their erect, black-breasted originals, standing on some wave-beaten rock. The Octopus orchid throws out radiant dropping tentacles; and the beautiful specimen known as the Espiritu Santo, discovered and almost worshipped by the Spaniards of Panama, was so named because it suggested to them the Holy Dove which descended upon Christ's head during His baptism in the Jordan. Some orchid blooms are as large as a man's two hands put together, while others have marvellous coloured streamers hanging down three feet from the plant.

It is the eccentricities of the orchid, both as to its habitat and flowering, which make dealing in it so uncertain a business. The delicate crispums of Colombia only grow at one precise level. They cannot exist higher up, because of the cold, and the intense heat of the valleys would also kill them. Some species die out altogether, and new orchids suddenly appear, to puzzle and vex amateurs and dealers alike, for their habitat is unknown.

Some years ago the great St. Albans house offered its Calcutta agent £1,000 for a growing plant of the Cypripedium Fairieanum, a stray specimen of which had been discovered previously by a collector who had been taken prisoner by some hill tribes in the "closed" territory of Bhutan, and forced to take part in intertribal fights until he met his death.

On another occasion two amazingly lovely orchid plants suddenly put forth unique blossoms in the Zoological Gardens, just behind the house of Mr. Clarence Bartlett, the superintendent. Mr. Bartlett sold the plants in flower to Mr. Frederick Sander, the great dealer, who at once took steps to trace the habitat of this new variety. A large reward was cabled to agents all over the Himalayan States, but all inquiries were in vain. It turned out later on that the plants had arrived with a consignment of monkeys from Central America, but no one could ever locate their natural home more nearly than this.

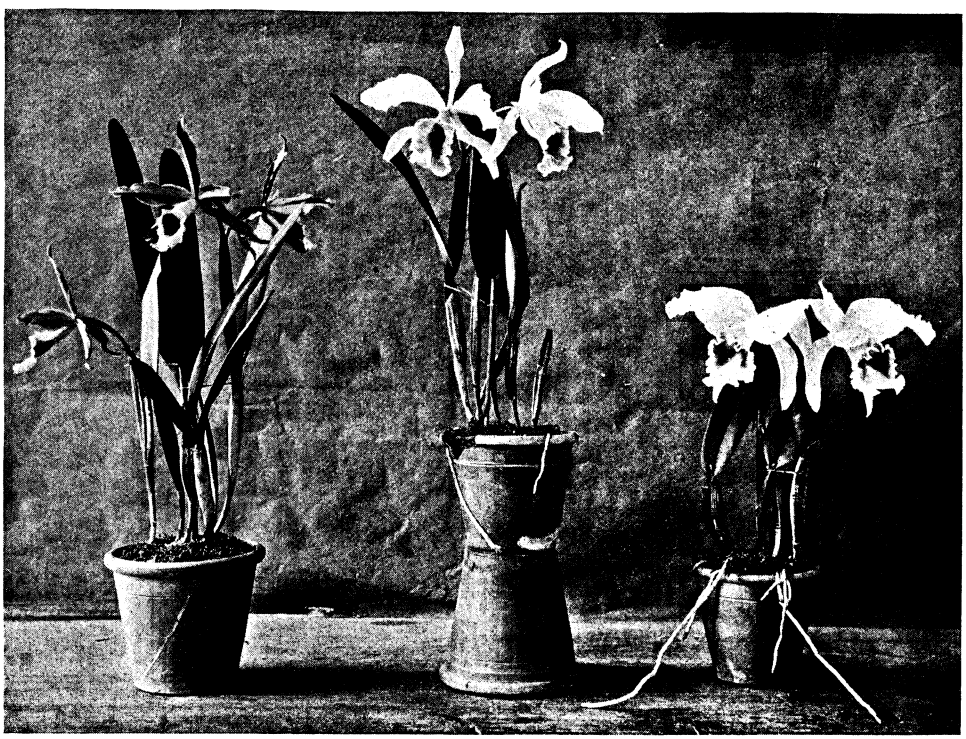
The Cattleya Labiata, too, has a curious



CYPRIPEDIUM CURTISII AND CYPRIPEDIUM BELLATULUM.

history. It was the first of all the cattleyas to be introduced from its supposed Brazilian home in the Organ Mountains, near Rio de Janeiro. But suddenly its habitat was mysteriously lost for many years, and it grew extremely scarce even under artificial cultivation. Search-parties went out to Brazil and adjacent countries, but merely discovered other valuable cattleyas. Arnold found C. Gaskelliana in the Caribbean Mountains; Seidl came upon the superb Lawrenciana in the Roraima. Years afterwards, the collector Bungeroth sent home what he arrived orchid plants. One day, a Mr. Harvey, a wealthy lawyer of Liverpool, and a well-known orchid amateur, was strolling through the hothouses of Mr. Frederick Sander, when he suddenly picked up a plant of Loelia Anceps, which had a ring-mark on its pseudo-bulb much higher up than usual. Having heard and seen much of orchid "freaks," Mr. Harvey bought the plant on the spot for forty-eight shillings, and a few seasons later sold it back to Mr. Sander for £200. It had produced blooms that were quite unique.

Mr. Sander, on another occasion, received



IN THE CENTRE LÆLIO-CATTLEYA CANHAMIANA, HYBRID OF THE LÆLIA PURPURATA (LEFT) BY CATTLEYA MOSSIÆ (RIGHT).

described as a new variety, and named it C. Warroqueana, which turned out, after all, to be the long-lost Labiata.

It is not clear why the gorgeous Disa Grandiflora, once known as "the Flower of the Gods," will only grow on a half-mile circle of Table Mountain, at the Cape of Good Hope. This variety is found nowhere else on earth, and "freaks" perversely when transplanted from its unique home, where it flaunts great scarlet blooms in wonderful profusion.

No dealer can value with certainty newly a large consignment of Cypripedium Insigne, and noticed among the plants one with a bright yellow flower-stalk, instead of the normal brown of the type. He put the plant on one side, and when it flowered, the bloom was a burst of glorious gold—a freakish novelty of a very splendid kind.

Now, if a variety be unique—a natural hybrid springing from crosses by Nature—it can never become plentiful. The flowers cannot be fertilised, as is usually done, with pollen from another plant, and the only way of propagating it is by dividing the original.

Mr. Sander cut his freakish cypripedium in two, and sold one-half for £105 at auction, and the other half for a like sum to a wealthy amateur. This gentleman, in turn, divided his little plant when it had grown, and sold two pieces at £100 each; and a third section Mr. Sander himself bought back for £260 for the purpose of hybridising.

There are no rules which can be laid down, dogmatically, with regard to orchids; and amateurs, who know least about them, are frequently the most fortunate buyers. An ordinary type of crispum, with its lovely, spotless white bloom growing on a long, graceful spray, may be only worth a few shillings; yet, suddenly, and without apparent cause, the flower may be varied with spots or great blood-red blotches, whereupon its value increases a thousandfold.

As much as £2,080 has been offered and refused for a single orchid plant; and £100 has been given for a microscopic speck of pollen for hybridising. In private deals between wealthy amateurs £1,200 has been paid for a unique specimen, and £700 for a duplicate or divided plant.

Orchid-growers take delight in owning these unique "sports," because no one else can possibly produce a similar specimen without the consent of the proprietor. At a recent international flower-show a perfectly white "freak" of a purple orchid was shown —the Lælia Purpurata Lewisi. The freak could have been sold for hundreds of pounds, whereas the ordinary purple variety of the plant has never fetched more than ten shillings.

Again, in the case of the cattleyas, white specimens are worth over £200, while ordinary forms of the same would be considered dear at sixteen shillings. A white form of the Cattleya Warnerii has been sold in London for £1,040, and a portion of the same plant was on offer at £600. The ordinary form was worth about eight shillings. To see and admire these freakish specimens, amateurs passed by banks of radiant crispums, some of them carrying one hundred and twenty magnificent blooms upon their four long graceful racemes.

It is doubtful whether any occupation involves more hardship and adventure than that of the orchid-hunter. One has to write



ORCHIDS OF COCHIN CHINA.—AËRIDES GODEFROYA AND AËRIDES HOULLETIANUM.



THE PRETTIEST OF THE CATTLEYA ORCHIDS.

of this work with some reserve, lest one be charged with extravagance and exaggeration. Although some of the collectors study in horticultural laboratories before going out, they may be said to be born and not made; for the successful orchid-hunter is a rare combination of enthusiastic scientist and veteran explorer. He must be a diplomat in dealing with savages, a clever shot, and a man of perfect physique, prepared to wade knee-deep in tropical bogs from dawn till noon.

A man is not blamed for heavy losses. "One season," remarked a great dealer, "I lost £1,300 on one of my collectors, and £800 on another." Of course, some common-sense is observed in sending them out. A Frenchman is sent to Madagascar; an Englishman to the Himalayas and Burma; a Hollander to Sumatra and Java; a German to New Guinea.

Almost all the best collectors, by the way, are German. They work from a certain base. A man about to collect on the foot-hills of the Himalayas will go direct to Calcutta, where he will cash his draft, buy his outfit, and engage servants and porters. On reaching the jungle he puts up huts for his men, and builds a rude bungalow for himself, with a broad piazza in front, where his orchids may be laid out, dried, and packed.

It is a difficult matter to discover the habitat of rare orchids, but the collector's trouble only begins at this stage. It must be borne in mind that the orchid plant is an epiphyte, or air-feeding parasite, growing on the trunks of forest trees, which must be cut down before the precious plants can be obtained. For this purpose a collector may employ one hundred and fifty natives, working on piecework—that is to say, they are paid by the number of plants they bring in.

But the collector must also cut down trees to make his packing-cases, and arrange for transportation by native coolie in Assam or Central Africa; by long-neck llama in the Andes and Cordilleras; by skin-rafts on the Indus and Bramahputra; or by elephant in Siam and Burma. Finally, the cases of delicate plants must be taken thousands of miles across the ocean in such a condition that at least twenty per cent. of them may arrive alive. And yet hundreds of plants may be collected with infinite care and at great expense on remote Andean peaks, or in steaming Papuan jungle, and sent home with freight amounting to hundreds of pounds—only for the dealer to find, on opening the cases, that every orchid is dead.

It has been computed that for every three scraps of odontoglossum in existence, at least one fine forest tree has been felled. When the orchids are brought in, they are dried for several weeks, and when free from moisture they are fastened to tough twigs and carefully packed in cases, with a liberal allowance of air. Great care is taken by the shipping agent at the nearest port to see that they are not placed too near the boilers on board ship, nor unduly exposed to sunlight.

There are, at this moment, many American collectors in Venezuela and Colombia. Mr. John E. Lager, the foremost American authority on orchids, usually makes for Honda, on the Rio de Magdalena. Leaving the river, whose palm-fringed banks are fairly alive with birds of glorious plumage, the hunter strikes inland on mule-back after Cattleya Trianæ, superb odontoglossums, and other varieties. The way lies through deep gorges and over cloud-capped mountains by rugged passes, often flood-swept.

Ibaqué is a splendid centre for collectors of the Cattleya Trianæ; and here Mr. Lager discovered the Epidendrum Lagerianum, and a white variety of the Cattleya Trianæ, which sold for £200. Unfortunately the natives care for nothing but white rum and bull-fighting, and it is difficult to hire them as orchid-hunters. The heat in these valleys, too, is intense, even as early as April, and the collector can work only two or three hours after dawn. What with bad food, night exposure, heavy dews, torrential rains, and mud often knee-deep, the orchid hunter's lot is not an enviable one.

The Cattleya Trianæ is found about Ibaqué at six thousand feet elevation, and down to two thousand feet. It persistently follows the rivers; and from two to twenty plants may be found on one tree. Here the collector either makes his own packing-cases from the forest trees which he fells, or else makes crates out of twigs fastened with strips of raw hide. The cases of orchids are carried by men or mules to the nearest river, and then rafted down rapids to the nearest port.

It is a wonderful sight to come upon the orchid in its home, running riot over a forest giant, whose limbs and trunk may be fairly blazing with fantastic blooms. Take the C. Chocoensis, which grows in a narrow strip along the Rio Cauca in Colombia, nourished only by the miasmatic mist which, under the great heat, rises from the swamps and marshes.

This orchid is more than unusually difficult to collect, for there are no native villages



RARE MEXICAN ORCHIDS: CATTLEYA CITRINA (HUNG UP) AND BRASSO-CATTLEYA.

in its habitat, so that labour, provisions, and transport are inordinately costly. Moreover, the Cauca River is a racing torrent full of rapids, and the cases of plants must be carried on mule-back across the stifling Cauca Valley and the Western Cordillera to the Pacific coast.

Often the journey up the Magdalena may take a fortnight, and when the collector lands, he may take up his headquarters in a bamboo hut mounted high upon piles, and walled and roofed with a few leaves of the Cocos Butyracea. In the background, beyond the tropical wilderness of vines and palms, the great blue chains of the Cordilleras tower one above another. The collector must wrestle with long trains of stubborn mules; he must wade or swim rivers, climb precipices, and lay the axe in forest trees after he has found a good district where

plants are abundant and show a good strain of varieties. He must also find a small army of native collectors, who will collect, store, and dry his plants, make packing-cases, load up the mules, and begin the work of transportation.

Moreover, his savage helpers must be taught what to collect and how best to go to work. When this lesson is learned, the natives take two weeks' provisions and bury themselves in mountains and valleys, ready to cut down all timber which bears an orchid. When the plants are seen, the trees are patiently felled, and the orchids packed in string bags. Often enough the collector himself is hopelessly lost for weeks at a time—as, for example, in the vast territory drained by the Amazon and the Orinoco, great stretches of which are still quite unexplored.

But the true orchid-hunter forgets all his troubles when the gorgeous blooms star the forest in his sight, and turn the twilit jungle into an Aladdin's Palace of opulent colour and beauty. It is most curious, by the way, how orchids avoid the earth. In this very country we have been describing, one may occasionally see the Odontoglossum Coronarium as a terrestrial plant, but it will throw out its magnificent flower-spikes and ramble for yards until it finds a suitable tree, which it will promptly climb until it gets light and sun, and then its terrestrial sections soon die.

Ten or twelve years ago orchids were much more plentiful and less costly to procure than is now the case. Take the beautiful spring-flowering Cattleya Mossiæ, whose home is in the remotest parts of the Central Cordillera of Venezuela. Once plentiful and easy of access, the native owners of forest and mountain in this region have become convinced that the "Flor de Mayo," as they call this Cattleya, is worth vastly more than its weight in gold. The Indians, in consequence, throw all kinds of obstacles in the way of the collector.

Mr. Adolf A. Sachse, one of the ablest of American orchid-hunters, has described his troubles during the long rainy season of this region, when the mountains are deluged and almost inaccessible, and the white man's only food are a few bananas, some edible roots, and raw sugar from the sugar-cane. In places the tropical undergrowth is so dense that lanes have to be hewn with the machete.

The successful collector, however, may cause curious fluctuations in the orchid market. Some two or three years ago, a resident of the German colony at Tovar, in New Granada, sent an almost unique plant, known as the Masdevallia Tovarensis, to a business friend in Manchester, England; and when it flowered, it was cut up and the fragments sold for large sums. Each purchaser, in due time, did the same thing with his section, and a conventional price of five dollars a leaf was established for the plant. An enterprising collector, however, set out for Caracas, and knew no rest until he sent home forty thousand plants of this Masdevallia, which drove the price down from five dollars a leaf to twenty-five cents, and gave all orchid-lovers a chance to acquire a very beautiful species at a reasonable price.

As to the adventures of orchid-hunters, there are several quite classic instances. Foremost among these is the case of the eminent French orchid grower and collector, M. Leon Humblot. Some years ago, M. Humblot was in Madagascar with his brother and six fellow Frenchmen, all engaged in collecting bugs and beetles, butterflies, birds, and orchids. Humblot was exploring an unknown region when he had the misfortune to plant a charge of birdshot in a native idol, whereupon the outraged priests of the tribe soaked him with oil and burned him alive.

A less tragic case is associated with the lovely Cypripedium Spicerianum. A Mrs. Spicer, living at Wimbledon, called upon a firm of florists and invited them to inspect a wondrous flower that had suddenly appeared in her greenhouse. The florists, after seeing the plant, offered £70 for it, and as the cypripeds are easy to cultivate, they hurried along their specimen, dividing it rapidly, and selling the portions at an enormous profit. There was little clue to its habitat, though it was surmised that this mysterious orchid was a native of Assam, Sikkim, or some other Himalayan State. All that Mrs. Spicer knew was that she had received the plant from her son, who was a tea-planter on the confines of Bhotan.

With this vague clue, the famous orchid-hunter, Ignace Forstermann, was asked to go out to northern India and find the habitat of this flower. Six weeks later, Forstermann was asking for employment as overseer at various tea-plantations in Assam and contiguous States; and the customary hospitality of Greater India did much to hinder him in his quest. Of course, there were tiger shoots, and "shikar" generally, besides more social functions.

At last he got well on the trail of the lovely cypriped, and became great friends

with young Mr. Spicer, who told him he had come upon the gorgeous blooms while shooting on the further side of a river beyond the British lines in the independent territory of Bhutan. It was an unhealthy country abounding in tigers.

But Forstermann left abruptly and plunged into the wilderness almost alone. Often his strength failed him as he waded waist-deep in swamps or swam giant rivers, or tried to force a way through those steaming clefts that fall from the vast Bhutanese Mountains. But at last the collector came upon a glade hemmed in by rocks, steep as a wall; and here, with an exclamation of triumph, he and his assistants reached out their bamboo rakes and dragged down masses of the superb orchid which had been sought so long and so heroically.

Yet Forstermann was by no means at the end of his troubles. After journeying to and fro between the wilderness and the nearest trading-post and nearly meeting his death two or three times, he succeeded in engaging thirty-two Bhutia porters, half of them to carry rice for the others along mountain tracks where twenty-five pounds is a heavy load. More than once these men revolted and threw down their loads in fear of tigers; but less than three months later, 50,000 plants of Cypripedium Spicerianum were offered for sale at Stevens' auction-rooms in Covent Garden, London, and the monopoly was at an end.



ORCHIDIUM VARICOSUM.

There is a somewhat similar story about the famous Cattleya Skinneri, an exquisite flower of pure virginal white. This Cattleya is a native of Costa Rica, where it was

originally discovered by some Jesuit priests, who promptly planted it all over the roofs of their churches, which it covered with lovely, spotless blooms.

Cattleyas take about five years to reach blooming period when they are raised from seed, and Masdevallias from two to three years. Some growers, instead of potting the plants, fasten them on to boards by means of staples, or on to strips of bark so as to imitate their natural way of growing on the trees. In the great hothouses, efforts are made as far as possible to reproduce the conditions under which the different varieties grow. Thus there may be a Borneo house with a temperature of 90°, while in the next house the temperature may be only 55°, because the orchids there come from the highlands of Mexico or lofty slopes of the Cordilleras.

In a third hothouse the air is impregnated with the fumes of tobacco to reproduce other conditions; and if the precious plants need moss from remote morasses of Sumatra and Java, it is forthcoming. One great European dealer receives 2,000,000 plants a year; and so great is the uncertainty about them that they are mostly sold at auction without any guarantee. Opening the cases, by the way, involves strange perils in the way of tarantulas, scorpions, stinging ants, and small poisonous snakes which may have clung to the plant.

But your true orchid-hunter has little patience in the hothouse, where no show of orchids, however opulent, impresses him. He recalls the wild magnificence of these parasites in their own home, fairly streaming from the great trees and setting the forest ablaze with beauty and colour. These men—there are not many of them—love their work for its own sake. They bury themselves, often for six months at a time, in the primeval jungle, with the alligators and monkeys, parrots and panthers, and would rather track the erratic Miltonia Vexillaria through the Central Cordillera than seek any other treasure considered precious by the rest of men!

[Author's Note.—My grateful acknowledgments for courteous assistance are more than due to Mr. Frederick Sander, "the Orchid King," of St. Albans; to Mr. John Lager, of Summit, New Jersey, U.S.A.; to Messrs. Sachse and Massmann, the well-known orchid-hunters, whose adventures and triumphs would fill a book.]



REPOTTING THE YOUNG ORCHIDS IN MOSS

PEYTON'S BAG.

By G. B. LANCASTER.

"WELL, if that isn't rotten luck!" said Tony Lascelles. "When we've given that fool Peyton the Chimney, too!"

Walt growled his disgust in his throat, for it was overstrong for selected words; and Peyton, whom Tony's hurried rising had trampled into the earth, fell out of the tent-opening, half-clothed, and extremely wroth.

"Stag," said Walt, in curt answer.

Peyton swept the universe with his glasses; picked up on the Chimney hill that which the other men watched bare-eyed, and crowed in a child's delight.

From their feet the snow-grass blew in ruddy ripples to the birch bush that climbed the steep hill. Above the bush were rounded gullies and straight-eyed ravines and narrow spurs. Behind all, and crowning half the earth, notched ranges rose white to the flushing sky—all to make background for one stag of the fourth year. He stood, monstrous and tense with life, on the snub nose of a bluff, and belled his challenge to the wind and to the sun that was coming up to listen. The antlers showed like naked branches of a tree, and his coat was sleeked with the night's dew.

"It's my beat!" Peyton snatched his things from everywhither in the blankest confusion. "You said last night that I could have the Chimney. It's a royal, I tell you. It's a bub-blessed fourteen-pointer. I counted—an' we've never seen more than a ten-tine before. I don't want any breakfast. Where's my——"

"Oh, go slow, for Heaven's sake!" said Tony in the wrath of a hunter. "You won't hit a hill unless it's the size of a mountain if you go losing your head that way. Keep cool, can't you, you silly ass? Of course it's your beat. Who said it wasn't? And don't you go shooting all over the shop, Peyton. A Mauser's too funny for that kind of thing."

It was Peyton's boast that he had shot eighteen men with the identical carbine which he was now scratching out of its case. That was in the Boer war, and no man in New Zealand believed it. Peyton did not himself. But to require of a man that he should both make a story and believe it is pure greed.

Peyton had turned up at Mindoorie Station, in the county of Southland, some three months back, giving Lane of Mindoorie to understand that they were of one blood, and might, with mutual happiness, be of one purse also. He stuck like a burr, and when Walt and Tony Lascelles agreed to take their holiday together that they might shoot red deer in Otago Central, Peyton offered to go with them.

"C'n yer shoot?" demanded Walt then, with his teeth on an oiled rag. He was trying to sluice some of the rust off his old ·303 with the broken leaf.

Peyton was really angry.

"Haven't I told you that I shot eighteen men——?"

"But there's jes' two of us"; Walt shook his head gravely. "Not ernuf meat fur sech as you ter feed on. Reckon me an' Tony cud do wi'out all that killin', too."

Peyton stared for a moment. Then he descended to prayers, and so gained grudging permission to help stalk some of the roughest deer country outside Scotland. And Tony, after giving Walt his very frankest opinions, told the men of the whares that he would knock the eternal stuffing out of Peyton before he brought him home again.

"You've heard him," he said. "You've heard him gassing about his Lyman sights, an' his drifts. Well, he won't gas much when he comes back, I'm thinking. You wait."

But the fear of Tony had not yet touched Peyton that bright morning in sight of the Chimney.

"Wind's blowin' up to him, isn't it?" he cried. "From the off, is it? If I go straight, I'll land him, won't I? Not? Which way had I better go, then? Don't you wish you were me, Tony? Nearly a mile off, isn't he?"

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"Strained with the lust of slaughter."

To the untrained eye it might have been a mile as the crow flies. But the two who stood by knew that it was a five-mile stalk over unkindly country, and that Peyton was not in a condition to face it. And they knew too that it was impossible to say so.

Walt jerked his thumb in the direction of a dimpled hollow at the bluff-foot. A half-score hinds and nobbers were moving in it.

"You kip yer eyes skinned as they don't give the alarm. Come out o' the bush quiet as a wren. Heavens, man, don't you go goin' off wi'out any tucker!"

Peyton swept cold meat and damper into his pocket, scudded through the burnt timber that began the bush, and dived out of sight like a scared rabbit. Walt sat on his heels and mended the fire.

"I'll tell yer what he'll git," he said. "An' it ain't no heads. He'll git blown in ten minutes. An' then he'll git lost. An' then he'll git scared, 'n like enough shoot us when we come nosin' him out. What'd I let him along fur, I wonner?"

"So's we could teach him things," said Tony solemnly.

Walt was dribbling tea-dust into the bubbling billy. He cast a swift upward glance at the young, keen face. Then he took the billy off the hook.

"Spit it out," he said. "You've got some devilment wakin', Tony. What yer goin' ter do? Foller up Peyton an' pepper his legs?"

Tony flung one glance at the branching horns now stooped to earth as the stag fed. And after, he laughed softly, reaching for the tea.

"I'm going to get that head," he said.

"Well," said Walt tolerantly, "Peyton'll never sight it agin, o' course. But he'll be rakin' the landskip up ter two thousand. I know his breed. And he'll mos' likely hit yer 'cos he won't be aimin' at yer. Hev yer thought o' that, Tony?"

"Yes," said Tony Lascelles.

He finished his breakfast and gathered up necessaries serenely. Then he flung Walt a caution as he loped off down-wind.

"Mind you rag Peyton well when he doesn't bring in the head. An' if you give me away, you'll smart for it."

The tasselled snowgrass dripped with dew, and where the sun drew up the sharp, fresh breath of earth Tony ran light as a hare, with something like quicksilver in his veins.

". . . . And it's well for me that I'm in condition," he said, tucking his rifle into his armpit. "Peyton will be sweating like green wood by now. Peyton, my son, I'm taking the long trail an' the hard trail, an' then I'm going to have you beat."

He crashed into the bush where the clematis and supple-jack tangle grew rife. And half a mile off the ends of that tangle were tripping Peyton and casting him headlong among the native nettle that slapped fiercely back again.

The sun rode gorgeously over the eastern ranges; but a tui had sighted him first from the swaying tip of a hundred-foot birch, and was already ringing her liquid notes down to the ferns by the waking creeks.

Tony trotted like a mustering dog up the ascent where it steepened and grew slippery with mosses and the soft peat of rotting tree-boles. He swung, hand by hand, up the vines dripping over the rocky frontlets, and walked with sure eye and sure foot over sliding shingle with giddy depths below. The bush was damp with breathless heat, and once, when he lay flat to cool his face on the moss, a wild sheep burst through the undergrowth with a five-year fleece on it. It sprang away uphill as a deer springs, and Tony rolled over to swear at it. For, being a sheep, and therefore quite devoid of sporting instincts, it was likely to run until it gave the alarm to the fourteen-pointer where he probably fed still on the bluff.

"But I'm goin' to have Peyton beat," grunted Tony, shaking his dripping head. "I'm going to have him beat, if it takes me all my life."

He crept out into the open, and found his feet among the dried litter of burnt bush which makes the very nastiest stalking country in the world. For in air that is absolutely still and clear, the snap of a stick under the boot rings like a rifle-shot.

Tony slid through the rubbish on cautious heels and toes. His heart thumped against his side, and his eyes were contracted. For the salt-lick to rightward dazzled, and the flinty hog-back that sprang from it winked with a thousand eyes.

Over a low hill he fell, suddenly with a clatter of shingle, on a house-party of hinds and young stags that had lately shed their antlers. A big, moth-eaten mother of the herd sprang out and began to cough at him, her head up, and her slim feet striking loud on the flint. Tony did not wait to explain. He turned and struggled up the naked, hot ridge behind him, in fear lest her anger should have disturbed her lord where he browsed.

From the ridge-top Tony saw him—saw him close, and dropped flat on the skyline with the blood throbbing in his eyes and murder in his heart.

". . . . For I'll kill Peyton if he interferes now," he said.

The stag fed slowly down the bluff-side, and the muscles rippled in sunlight over a massive shoulder and well-set ribs. His head was purely perfect. He raised it once, and Tony shuddered in soul-sick. But there was no alarm in the easy, powerful movements that brought him near—near—and nearer.

In Tony's hand the rifle seemed to breathe, and Tony understood that its spirit also strained with the lust of slaughter.

"He's mine," sobbed Tony in his throat. "Mine—mine——" And then a dead stick cracked under his elbow.

The crack of the rifle rang with it, and before the eye blinked, the stag fled upward, carrying a bullet behind his off shoulder.

Tony had the lungs and the legs of a musterer, and he followed with tight lips and wide-blown nostrils. He had learnt that concentration which thrusts all but the main

issue aside, and he had no time for anger or disgust. He took knoll and sharp descent and smothering bush-patches bravely, and his second wind found him undistressed and gaining, inch by inch.

"I hit! I'll swear I hit! Oh-h-h!"

The brute stumbled to his knees, rose again and swerved down a long stone gully. Tony put his whole mind-power into his legs.

"A hare runs half-mile after it's dead," he said. "I'm bound to get another shot in sooner or later, and then——"

And then, over a spur a full hundred chain nearer the stag, rose Peyton, who fell on his knees and began pumping lead into the valley after the approved manner of a slayer of men.

The black figure on the knife-edged spur was to Tony Lascelles like the devil who comes up through a trap-door in "Faust," and Tony cursed it whilst absolute despair shook him on his feet. For, by all the laws which a man of honour may know, the Chimney and that which moved upon it belonged in this hour to Peyton.

Peyton splintered a rock and pushed in a new clip before he gave chase. But that did not matter. Death had charge of the stag, and when He took the life, Peyton would unquestionably take the head—and the glory.

"I can prove it's mine," said Tony, swinging downward through the shadeless glare. "Peyton uses soft-nosed bullets. I can prove——" And yet he knew that he must not prove it.

Peyton had no wind, and Tony closed up rapidly, as the stag's pace slowed to an uneven trot. But he was yet half the length of the gully away, making for the bush that led into the unknown.

Down a steep, narrow gut Tony drew to the lead. But he ran in cover of matakuri and manuka that Peyton might not see. That head was his only if Peyton fell out. And this although he knew very surely that Peyton had not hit.

Peyton rolled down a shingle-slope and lay, sick and giddy, on the sun-baked tussock below. But the stag veered to drink at a puddle in a flax-swamp, to leftward, and the action pricked Peyton forward on an unsteady gait. And at this moment both men would have given all the days of their lives to sit on those mighty branching horns and saw them away from the gleaming neck.

"Plop, plop!" said Peyton's rifle insistently. "Plop! Plop! Plop!"

"Always said those Lyman sights were no good for fast work," murmured Tony, taking swift observations through the scrub. "Either that, or the fellow can't shoot worth a tinker's benediction. Ah-h! Down again! That was a good shot that nicked him. A deuced good shot!"

The end came swiftly. A slip scored a wide track out of the sheer bush some hundred yards to northward, and on the red clay breast of it the red deer's life left the body with a roar of defiance.

Peyton crawled up to give thanks over what remained, and Tony sat below, loathing all things created and Peyton in particular. But in time curiosity overrode pride, and he too climbed up to locate the one good shot which had won the game for another.

Peyton was proud beyond authorised conceit, and so self-engrossed that he did not ask Tony's business on his beat. He put his finger in the little round hole behind the shoulder and demanded praise.

"Only had two shots at him," he explained. "And this one was a clean thousand-yarder."

Tony said nothing. There did not appear to be any words yet invented which would fit the case.

". . . . . Pity you've not had the training I've had," ended Peyton. "And course it isn't every man even then who—er—how d'you get the brute's head off?"

Tony showed, touching the beautiful thing lovingly. For, when all was said, it was still his by his right hand's cunning.

Peyton had not the instincts of a gentleman. He was purely and unrelievedly a bounder, and Tony's senses were raw with disgust before the head was off and set on Peyton's back, that he might carry it home for the envy of his fellows.

The ground was incredibly rough. Peyton knew nothing of short cuts, nor did Tony enlighten him: the fresh breeze of morning had forged the still heat of noonday.

In a very little time Peyton's joints were loosed by exhaustion, and when he flagged and fell, Tony's scorn alone scourged him to the labour again. Tony was getting such small consolation out of this as the situation held, and the joy of living came back to him as Peyton turned plum-colour and breathed with gasping mouth.

The burdened man stumbled, dropped the stark thing from him, whimpered.

"Tony," he said. "Oh . . . . Tony, do carry it a bit! Please, Tony. Just a mile. Half, then. Till I get my second wind. Please, old chap." He hesitated before



"'Oh, Tony, do carry it a bit!'"

Tony's expressionless face. "I'll pay you for it," he said.

"You almighty bounder!" said Tony in his heart. But his face did not change, and his words came levelly. "You say it's your kill," he said. "You say I've nothing to do with it. Well, then, you'll lump it yourself. I've nothing to do with your beastly arrangements. Why didn't you drive him home first?"

Peyton had at least learnt some kinds of language in the Boer war. He proceeded to prove this until Tony's desire for blows shrunk him to penitence. He pulled out his food and ate, muttering underbreath, and Tony, opposite, fed in a stern silence.

The halt sent the sun well to the westing, but it did not greatly refresh Peyton. He staggered on with his burden, and Tony noted that the very marrow of the man had dripped from him, that his knees shook, that he crowed in his breath.

A short quarter-mile further and the head pitched on its raw neck into the bracken. Tony's eyes flooded with a sudden, glorious hope.

"Peyton," he cried, "are you coming back for this to-morrow?"

Peyton staggered on blindly.

"Never! I'm never coming back. No."

"Peyton! Do you give up all claim to this head?"

"Y—yes! Don't talk of it. I don't want to think of it. It makes me sick."

"Then I'll take it home myself," said Tony in solemn joy.

It was a simple thing now. So simple that he wondered that he had not foreseen it. The matter could wait until Peyton left Mindoorie, and than all Southland men should learn that Tony Lascelles had shot a fourteen-pointer in Otago Central.

With all the strength and knack that were in him, he heaved up the head and trudged forward.

"You buoolock!" growled Peyton, stumbling after.

The raw skin flapped on Tony's neck and the weight taxed his powerful muscles most cruelly. But he was content. The head was his. His very own. And also, Peyton had already carried it half the distance. This was a joy not to be forgotten when all should be told in the future.

Haze of night was on the hills and firelight in the tent when they came to it. Tony dropped the head by the chopping-block and cast himself beside it. And his chest laboured like an ungreased crank, and his limbs ached bitterly.

Walt fell on his knees in open admiration, and Peyton, being partially recovered, thrust a hand in his trouser-pocket and held out silver to Tony.

"Thanks, Tony," he said. "I don't know how I'd have got the thing back by myself. A good head, isn't it, Walt? Worth a decent tip, eh?"

Peyton had been assorting moves for the last hour. Tony was unprepared.

"You hound!" he shouted, and sent the handful spinning into the snowgrass. "What the blazes——"

Then Walt put his arms round Tony and forced the silence necessary for Peyton's explanation. This was simple.

"I offered to pay Tony for carrying it, and at first he said he wouldn't. But when I got done an' chucked it, he said he would. What's he making the row about? Didn't I offer him enough?"

"Yer'd better not go clean off yer head, Tony," said Walt sympathetically. "What yer got ter say, now?"

"It's mine—mine! He said he gave up all claim. Peyton, you——"

Peyton stood with his legs apart, and the firelight washing over his little, mean face and body.

"You Colonial fellows have queer ideas of ethics," he observed. "No gentleman would want to set up a head shot by another man. And what were you doin' on my beat, anyway? We call that sort o' thing poaching at home."

Tony looked at the four sides of the thing and saw that he was beaten.

"You've as much right to it as to your eighteen men," he said. "An' you can put em all in one bag. Let me go, Walt. I'm not going to touch the pig. I wouldn't touch him without — without a disinfectant. Oh, shut up that giggling, can't you?"

"What way was yer goin' ter teach Peyton things, then?" inquired Walt, later.

But Tony Lascelles gave not any answer at all.

A SUNDIAL STORY.

By L. G. MOBERLY,

Author of "Diana," "Hope, My Wife," "Angela's Marriage," etc.

A ROSE tree dropped a shower of crimson petals upon the velvet grass that surrounded the old sundial. No living soul, not even the oldest inhabitant in the village, had any distinct idea of the actual age of the sundial, nor how many generations had come and gone whilst it marked the sun's journey across the heavens from its place in the centre of the lower lawn at Dimshaven Hall. It was certainly very old—that was a self-evident fact; very old and very time-worn; soft green moss had crept about its foot, wind and weather had done their utmost to erase the motto carved upon its face, and in the course of ages some of the stone had even crumbled away. Yet still it stood upon the velvet grass-plot, and summer after summer the rose tree that grew beside it dropped crimson petals at its base. Wind and weather had almost succeeded in working their will upon the motto, for only here and there was it possible to decipher a letter. It would have needed much guess-work to imagine the whole sentence correctly, if it had not been inscribed in the records of Dimshaven Hall, that rested on the lower shelf of the library bookcase.

The girl who stood beside the sundial, on a June morning long and long ago, moved her fingers daintily along the barely decipherable letters—brushing away, as she did so, morsels of crumbling stone, pulling up here and there tiny pieces of vivid green moss, stopping sometimes to watch the rose-petals shaken down by the summer breeze.

"'I only mark the happy hours,'" she said slowly, then she lifted her head and looked at the man who stood by her side. It was not necessary that she should raise her head very far to look into his face, for the two slim young figures were nearly equal in height, and the brightly indignant eyes of the one could gaze almost directly into the defiant eyes of the other.

"'I—only—mark—the—happy—hours,'" she repeated slowly, and as she spoke she walked with leisurely steps round the sundial, her fingers still passing over the worn lettering. "Why do you stand there silent and glum, Ambrose?" she added sharply the next moment, when her twice-repeated reading of the worn motto drew forth no response from her companion. "Have you nothing to say? Why do you stand there like a statue—and a cross statue, too?"

"Because—there is nothing more to be said," he answered; and though his voice shook, there was in it a ring of pride and of indomitable resolution.

"Nothing more to be said?" The girl's head, which had been once more bent towards the sundial, was quickly lifted, her angry eyes again sought his defiant ones: "Nothing more to be said? Do you mean that this——"

"I mean—that this is—good-bye," he answered; and when he said the words, all the trembling had gone out of his voice, and nothing was left in it but a certain grim inflexibility and indomitable determination. "This is good-bye," he repeated.

"Do you mean that, really and truly?" She spoke impetuously, and over her proud young face there passed a strange smile. "You wish to say 'Good-bye' to *me*—to me, Delicia Dimshaven?"

The eyes of the man beside her swept her from head to foot, and, perhaps because she was very fair to see, and he had loved her very dearly, he winced as his glance lingered upon her. The straight folds of her white gown did not hide the graceful lines of her supple young form, the sunshine turned the crown of her fair hair into a halo of gold; her grey eyes with the light of pride in them shone like two stars; the colour that came and went upon her lovely face set his pulses throbbing. The queenliness of her bearing told of the noble race from which she sprang. For a full moment he did not speak; and for that full moment the girl believed he was preparing to yield his will to hers.

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But if the Lady Delicia was proud, so also was her betrothed husband, Ambrose Mailsham, and his will was a match and more than a match for hers! And when that moment had drifted by in total silence, he spoke gravely and quietly, but he spoke also with the decision of a man whose mind is irrevocably made up, and who cannot be turned from his purpose merely because a woman is beautiful, and her bearing the bearing of a queen.

"I mean that I am here to say 'Good-bye' to you." These were his words, not precisely repeating what she had said, but adapting them to his purpose. "Nothing else is possible after what you have more than implied. A man can bear much from the woman he loves, but you have overstepped the limit of my endurance. I can bear no more. I do not intend to bear any more. This is good-bye."

She laughed—a low laugh whose tones were very musical, very sweet, but which, nevertheless, held a note of mockery that stung the young lover's pride afresh.

"Good-bye — until — to-morrow?" she asked, looking at him through her half-closed eyelids, and then looking down to brush away a rose-petal that lay like a stain of blood against the whiteness of her gown, "or — will it be until the day after to-morrow?" The mocking note that had sounded in her laughter rang also in her words; there was mockery in her grey eyes when she opened them fully and met his stern gaze defiantly. "Or perhaps," she added, when still he did not reply, "perhaps —you will even say it for a week—for a whole week."

"Delicia," he answered sharply, so sharply that for an instant the girl started and lost some of her composure, "I am not jesting. I am speaking in earnest. This is the end. You have laughed at me; you have mocked me; you have had your own will entirely—since the day when I asked you to be my wife. And I bore it all, because I knew that you loved me. But—it was no jest when you taunted me last night with marrying you for your great heritage. You meant what you said, and in saying it you have overstepped the bounds of my endurance. I can bear no more."

The young man spoke with a simple dignity which matched well with his fair, handsome face and dauntless eyes; matched well, too, with his clean-cut lips and strong chin, that gave his face its look of proud determination.

"I have come here to-day to repeat to you in words what my letter said to you this morning—unless you take back the accusation you made against me, this is 'Good-bye.'"

At the quiet masterfulness of his voice all her composure had returned to her, and his dictation of terms roused to the full the pride that showed itself on her face as on his.

"I shall take back nothing!" she said impetuously. "I am not accustomed to being ordered to say this or to do that. I shall take back nothing!" and as she threw up her head with a proud gesture, the sunbeams caught the golden strands of her hair and wove them into a crown of glory.

"Then you think—you actually think that I am a fortune-hunter? That I, Ambrose Mailsham, would stoop to marry a woman for her money and her lands, even if she were as great and rich an heiress as you are, Lady Delicia? You really believe that of me?"

"I told you last night what I thought," the girl answered with assumed indifference, and whilst she spoke she turned towards the rose tree and snapped off a great crimson blossom from its stalk, holding it against her face and looking over it at her companion, with still that mocking laughter in her eyes. "I do not change my opinions so easily."

"You said last night that you knew I was marrying you because of your title and your inheritance," Ambrose answered slowly, making a great effort to control his rising anger. "You were in a temper at the time, Delicia—that I freely grant; but even in a temper you had no right to say such things to me."

"In a temper?" A flame of colour ran over her face, her eyes flashed. "You pretend to love me, and yet—you tell me that I was in a temper—I—Delicia Dimshaven? I think you forget——"

"I forget nothing," the young man answered gravely, as he watched the haughty drawing up of her graceful figure, the proud turn of her head, the flash of anger in her eyes. "On the contrary, I remember that you, my betrothed wife, taunted me in a fit of temper with marrying you for your money. I am not a rich man, Delicia—I am not ashamed to own it; but you must take back the words you said last night, or this is 'Good-bye.'"

"'*Et puis—bonjour!*'" she quoted, her soft laugh ringing out across the grass plot, startling the doves that flew in and out of the dovecote by the wall.

"No—'Good-bye,'" came the grave response.



"She dropped him a mocking curtsy."

"You are pleased to take all I say as a jest this afternoon, but I am in earnest. If you do not take back your words, I shall go away to-day, and never come back."

Perhaps the gravity of his tone arrested her gaiety at last, for she looked at him with startled eyes, and the smile died away from her face.

"Never come back?" she said.

"Never come back," he repeated, "unless you write and ask me to forgive you for those words. Unless you ask me to come back to you."

"*Ask* you for forgiveness? *ask* you to come back?" She lifted her face proudly: "Delicia Dimshaven is not a beggar. If you choose to go in a tantrum, you can go, and I do not care, and I shall not ask you to return. I am not the woman to beg for any man's favour—not even yours."

And with another flash of her grey eyes, she first dropped him a mocking curtsy, and then flung at his feet the crimson rose she had gathered. He stooped to pick it up, but even though his hand held the fragrant flower in a close clasp, there was no sign of relenting in his face. Only he drew a step nearer to her, and for a moment stood there in silence watching how the sunlight made golden gleams in her hair, how softly the colour came and went over her beautiful, downcast face.

"Then—it is—good-bye," he said at last.

"So be it," she answered quickly.

"And what I said to you just now, I mean absolutely. I shall never come back unless you ask me to forgive you. I have not resigned my commission yet. If you do not call me back to you, I shall have sailed for India before the end of the month."

There was no wavering in his proud young voice; there was no wavering in her proud young face when she uplifted it and once again looked squarely into his eyes.

"I wish you a good voyage," she replied, and with one hand she gathered her white robe about her, whilst with the other she snapped another crimson-hearted rose from its stem and placed it in her dress. "There is nothing else to be said." As she spoke, she moved slowly away from him. "We understand each other completely, and—this is the end." Still she moved on across the grass-plot; and as she went, the June breeze showered another handful of crimson petals over the whiteness of her gown, whilst her lover stood watching her with eyes grown suddenly dim with pain and longing. But because her back was turned upon him, she took note neither of the longing nor the pain, and only when she came to the end of the little velvet lawn did she look back once over her shoulder towards his quiet form.

"*Et puis—bonjour!*" she cried, mockery in the depths of her shining grey eyes, mockery in the smile that hovered about the firm line of her lips, "*et—puis—bonjour!*"

The soft air carried the words back to him once again, as the white gown passed out of his sight behind the clipped yew hedge—as his eyes lingered for the last time upon the gleaming of her hair, where the sunlight touched it into gold.

"*Et puis—bonjour*," he whispered, as he crushed in his hand the crimson rose she had flung down at his feet; "so—this is the end."

His lips touched the bruised petals of the rose he had crushed, and it was tenderly laid between the leaves of his pocket-book before he too turned from the fragrant rose tree and the moss-grown sundial to walk across the lawn through the golden glory of that June afternoon which would never come again.

* * * * *

The days slipped one by one away, the weeks sped quickly by, and a girl with proud grey eyes and sunny hair watched their going with a sick fear at her heart, and a dismay which refused to be gainsaid.

"He will never keep his word," she said, during the first few of those swiftly passing days. "He will come back and ask me to forgive him; he will never be able to keep his word."

But the flying days glided into flying weeks, and when still her prophecy remained unfulfilled, some of the proud confidence died out of her eyes, and the half-glad, half-scornful certainty of her smile faded away.

And when there were only three days left before his ship set sail for the East; when she knew that in three short days he would have passed away from English shores, out of her sight, perhaps out of her ken—perhaps, even—only this dread she scarcely dared to breathe in the depths of her own soul—perhaps even out of both sight and ken for ever—then she was seized by a passion of fear, a tempest of longing and regret.

And in those moments of regret and passionate yearning she wrote the letter that would bring him back to her side! All her pride was humbled in the dust, because of the knocking at her heart of that awful fear

that her penitence had come too late, that her petition for forgiveness might, at this eleventh hour, fail of its intent. Yet, far down in her heart, she laughed at her own fears. Ambrose would forgive her! Nothing she could do would be too heinous, too terrible, to put her beyond the reach of his forgiveness. His love would never fail her; she was as sure of it as of her own beauty, her own pride, that, until now, nothing had ever been able to conquer.



"As she walked down the lane of people."

Until now? But now all was changed, and the letter that left Dimshaven Hall on a fair evening at the close of June was written in words of deepest humility, blistered and stained with tears. And the girl who wrote the letter—the proud young owner of all the vast acres of land that lay about the Hall—the girl who ruled in her own right over countless hamlets and villages, farms and scattered cottages; the girl who in all her life had never been known to stoop her proud young head before any living being, spent the hours of suspense that came after the sending of her letter as any other girl might have spent them. To sit still within the house was impossible, to rest was out of the question; she wandered over her own great park—distrait, restless, anxious, worn with the consuming anguish of hope deferred, waiting—waiting—waiting for the reply that never came. In the golden afternoons she watched by the gate through which her lover had always come to her, telling herself that she had been foolish to expect a letter! Ambrose would come to her himself, to bring her his answer with his own lips: Ambrose would not delay a moment in his haste to tell her he forgave, in his longing to be at peace with her again. Ambrose would come—would come——

But the golden afternoons faded into fragrant June nights; and the short nights passed quickly again into radiant summer days; but Ambrose did not come, and no letter came in answer to that penitent letter she had written with tears and in bitterness of heart.

And the day when his ship should sail to the East came and went, yet no word from him reached the girl; and because her pride was broken, her heart broke as well, in these rose-scented days of June;

and she said to herself in the anguish of her soul—

"I wrote to him too late. I have deserved it all. I was wrong—wrong from beginning to end in my wicked pride—and now that my punishment has come, I will bear it as he would have me bear it. If he wishes me to do it, I will live my life without him, but I shall never forget; no—I shall never forget!"

* * * * *

The man who was making his slow progress up the wide staircase of Lady Renster's house on a June evening two years ago, looked about him with eyes in which there was a certain mingling of bewilderment and surprise. It was so long, so very long, since he had taken any part in Society functions—indeed, since he had been in touch with civilisation at all—that it was not wonderful if his glance was sometimes a little dazed as it fell on the profuse floral decorations, the radiant electric light, the gorgeous gowns of the smart folk who jostled and pushed one another in their efforts to reach their hostess at the top of the staircase. The old man—for he was an old man, despite his upright bearing and keen blue eyes—felt strangely lost amongst the gay throng; for nearly forty years had passed over his head since he last took part in a big London reception—indeed, since he last entered a London drawing-room at all. His instinct would have led him to creep into the nearest corner, and from there watch the shifting scene and try to readjust himself to his surroundings. But Sir Ambrose Mailsham's was a name too well known and too much revered in every corner of the Empire to make it possible that Sir Ambrose himself should lurk in corners or hide his light under a bushel, and five minutes after he had reached his hostess's side, he found himself in the circle of a crowd of men and women all eager to speak to the great man and to hear his quiet talk of the corner of the world which he had first explored, and then governed for England. He was in the act of answering a question put to him by a rising young diplomatist, when his words were suddenly checked, and the young man, glancing into the old man's face, saw a startled look spring into his blue eyes, heard him draw in his breath with a quick gasp of surprise or dismay.

"Who—who is that?" he said, breaking off the thread of his discourse and touching the arm of the diplomatist with a hand which shook—"the tall girl, across the room, in white, with crimson roses in her hand?"

The young man's glance followed the speaker's and rested upon the face of a girl—straight and tall and very fair. Her grey eyes looked squarely out upon the world, her colouring was fresh and exquisite as the colour of briar roses in June, and her hair gleamed in the light of the electric lights till it seemed as though she wore a golden halo.

"That," the young man answered, "is said to be the loveliest *débutante* of the year: Lady Delicia Barton."

"Lady—Delicia?" the old man's voice trembled.

"Yes; she is a daughter of Lord Cramstoke, and a granddaughter of another famous beauty, Lady Delicia Stanton. Her grandmother has brought her here to-night. The grandmother is the widow of Mr. Rodney Stanton, and was a great heiress in her own right, as Lady Delicia Dimshaven. Her son inherits the Dimshaven title—the girl is her daughter's child. There she is—and, by Jove! in my opinion she runs her granddaughter pretty close, even now!"

It is doubtful whether the ears of his listener had grasped the meaning of all that the young man said; but it is certain that Sir Ambrose's eyes did not fail to see the tall and beautiful lady, for whom a little lane of guests had parted, as she walked down the crowded room. Time and sorrow had softened the face that had been so proud when he saw it last by the sundial in the garden; pride was no longer its predominating characteristic, and there was no mockery now in the deep-set eyes or winning smile. The hair which, on that long past day, had shone golden in the sunlight, was white now—snowy white—and, piled softly about her shapely head, made a fitting frame for her face, that still wore the dainty colouring which long ago had made her lover think of apple blossoms in spring.

His eyes watched her hungrily as she walked down the lane of people towards him, the sweeping folds of her black velvet gown falling round her in heavy, graceful folds, crimson roses at her breast, crimson roses in her hand.

And then—she saw him! The eyes that had not met for over forty years met again, and over Lady Delicia's delicate old face there swept a flood of colour that made it all at once look young as a girl's once more.

"Delicia!" he whispered, taking her outstretched hand, and forgetting everything about him in his surprise, realising nothing except her gracious presence. "Delicia!"

More self-possessed than he, she put her



"'*Et puis—bonsoir!*' she said."

hand through his arm, and led him gently away from the crowded rooms into a conservatory that was very quiet and very fragrant with the sweetness of roses and heliotrope.

Then she dropped his arm and looked into his face, a sudden gleam in her eyes of the old mockery, the old pride!

"You have remembered," she said, "after forty years?"

"I have never forgotten," he answered. "I never forgot—I never changed. You must forgive me for calling you by the old name; but to me you are always Delicia—just Delicia."

The tenderness in his voice sent a flame of colour into her face again, but she said gravely, almost sternly—

"But my letter? You did not answer my letter. You let me—break my heart—waiting—waiting—for what never came! Ah! it is over now." She raised her hand to prevent his replying, and she even laughed, a soft, low laugh. "It was all over long ago; but, none the less, you were cruel."

"Wait, Delicia!" he cried, the impetuosity of youth in his voice, in his eyes; "wait till you have heard, till you have seen." Whilst he spoke, whilst her eyes watched him intently, he took from his pocket a long notebook, and from between its leaves drew out an envelope, yellow with age, and bearing a stamp of a year long past. In silence he laid the letter in her hand, but when she started and would have spoken, he said gently—

"That letter reached me only yesterday."

"Only yesterday?" her voice faltered, her eyes grew dim. "Only yesterday? And it was posted to you forty years ago. Forty years ago, Ambrose; and it reached you only yesterday!"

"Only yesterday," he repeated gravely. "It is a strange story. It came to me enclosed in a letter from a man whose name is quite unknown to me, living in the heart of Australia. He said that he had found

this letter of mine tightly wedged into the pages of a newspaper which had been posted to his father years and years ago, which had for some unexplained reason remained unopened, and which he had unfastened out of a faint curiosity to read the news in a paper of forty years back. And there, folded away amongst its leaves, was this letter. Delicia, it only came to me yesterday, and to-day——"

"To-day"—she spoke with an attempt at lightness which was not altogether successful—"to-day you find me the chaperon of a granddaughter; you find me old, and white-haired, and worn out, with the past——"

"With the past forgotten?" he questioned, drawing nearer to her, and looking deep into her eyes. "Is it all forgotten, Delicia? Did you love the man you married? Did he put me out of your mind for ever?"

Her eyes had dropped before the look that had leapt into his, but they were lifted bravely again now.

"I married a good man," she said, "and I cared for him, and respected him, and did my utmost to be a good wife. But——"

"But——"

"Ah, Ambrose, I was obliged to marry," she said suddenly, throwing out her hands towards him. "I could not leave my 'goodly heritage' to fall into alien hands. I was obliged to marry, but my husband died many years ago."

"You have not forgotten?" he whispered; and now he stood so close to her that his lips could nearly touch the soft crown of her snow-white hair. "You remember the sundial, and the crimson rose tree, and the motto which your fingers pointed out?"

"'I only mark the happy hours,'" she whispered; and now his arm was drawing her more closely to him. "The happy hours," she said again, and this time a laugh that was half a sob broke from her. "But happy hours are for young lovers; we are too old to—to——"

"Too old?" He lifted her face tenderly with his hand and looked into her eyes again. "Too old?" A triumphant laugh escaped him. "Here is your letter, sweetheart, asking me to forgive you and to come back. And—I—have—come—back, to you—at last!"

* * * * *

Round the sundial on the velvet patch of lawn a rose tree showered its crimson petals. A golden sunset wove a veil of light above the elms in the park, where the rooks wheeled slowly, with soft, mellow cawings. The summer air was fragrant with the scent of roses, sweet with the sweetness of new-mown hay. If the man and woman who moved away from the grey old sundial were no longer young, their faces shone with a happiness that age could never touch nor destroy.

Lady Delicia carried a spray of crimson roses; Sir Ambrose, her husband, held a rose of the same deep hue in his hand.

"We are too old to be so happy," she said gently, but her laugh of joy contradicted her words.

"Too old?" he laughed, in answer. "Never too old for love and happiness, my sweet. All the hours we mark will be happy ones, whilst you and I are together."

Her hand touched his arm, their lips met, and then they slowly walked away across the grass-plot in the golden light of evening.

"Always happy whilst we are together," he repeated.

"*Et puis—bonsoir*," she said, a smile on her face, a mistiness in her eyes, "*et puis—bonsoir*."

FOND COUNSEL.

O YOUTH, beside thy silver-springing fountain,
In sight and hearing of thy father's cot,
These and the morning woods, the lonely mountain,
These are thy peace, although thou know'st it not.
Wander not yet where noon's unpitying glare
Beats down the toilers in the city bare;
Forsake not yet, not yet, the homely plot,
O Youth, beside thy silver-springing fountain.

HENRY NEWBOLT.

THE SUN-GAZER.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

TO Jim Horner it seemed as if the great, white-headed eagle was in some way the uttered word of the mountain and the lake—of the lofty, solitary, granite-crested peak, and of the deep, solitary water at its base. As his canoe raced down the last mad rapid, and seemed to snatch breath again as it floated out upon the still water of the lake, Jim would rest his paddle across the gunwales and look upward expectantly. First his keen, far-sighted, grey eyes would sweep the blue arc of sky, in search of the slow circling of wide, motionless wings. Then, if the blue was empty of this far shape, his glance would range at once to a dead pine standing sole on a naked and splintered shoulder of the mountain, which he knew as "Old Baldy." There he was almost sure to see the great bird sitting, motionless and majestic, staring at the sun. Floating idly and smoking, resting after his long battle with the rapids, he would watch, till the immensity and the solitude would creep in upon his spirit and oppress him. Then, at last, a shrill yelp, far-off, and faint but sinister, would come from the pine-top; and the eagle, launching himself on open wings from his perch, would either wheel upward into the blue, or flap away over the serried fir-tops to some ravine in the cliffs that hid his nest.

One day, when Jim came down the river and stopped, as usual, to look for the great bird, he scanned in vain both sky and cliff-side. At last he gave up the search and paddled on down the lake with a sense of loss. Something had vanished from the splendour of the solitude. But presently he heard, close overhead, the beat and whistle of vast wings, and looking up, he saw the eagle passing above him, flying so low that he could catch the hard, unwinking, tameless stare of its black and golden eyes as they looked down upon him with a sort of inscrutable challenge. He noted also a peculiarity which he had never seen in any other eagle. This one had a streak of almost black feathers immediately over its left eye, giving it a heavy and sinister eyebrow. The bird carried in the clutch of its talons a big, glistening lake trout, probably snatched from the fish-hawk; and Jim was able to take note of the very set of its pinion-feathers as the wind hummed in their tense webs. Flying with a massive power quite unlike the ease of his soaring, the eagle mounted gradually up the steep, passed the rocky shoulder with its watch-tower pine, and disappeared over the edge of a ledge which looked to Horner like a mere scratch across the face of the mountain.

"There's where his nest is, sure!" muttered Horner to himself. And remembering that cold challenge in the bird's yellow stare, he suddenly decided that he wanted to see an eagle's nest. He had plenty of time. He was in no particular hurry to get back to the settlement and the gossip of the cross-roads store. He turned his canoe to land, lifted her out and hid her in the bushes, and struck back straight for the face of "Old Baldy."

The lower slope was difficult to climb, a tangle of tumbled boulders and fallen trunks, mantled in the soundless gloom of the fir-forest. Skilled woodsman though he was, Horner's progress was so slow, and the windless heat became so oppressive to his impatience, that he was beginning to think of giving up the idle venture, when suddenly he came face to face with a perpendicular and impassable wall of cliff. This curt arrest to his progress was just what was needed to stiffen his wavering resolution. He understood the defiance which his ready fancy had read in the stare of the eagle. Well, he had accepted the challenge. He would not be baffled by a rock. If he could not climb over it, he would go round it; but he would find the nest.

With an obstinate look in his eyes, Horner began to work his way along the foot of the cliff towards the right. Taking advantage of every inch of ascent that he could gain, he at last found, to his satisfaction, that he had made sufficient height to clear the gloom of the woods. As he looked out over their tops,

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a light breeze cooled his wet forehead, and he pressed on with fresh vigour. Presently the slope grew a trifle easier, the foothold surer, and he mounted more rapidly. The steely lake, and the rough-ridged, black-green sea of the fir-tops began to unroll below him. At last he rounded an elbow of the steep, and there before him, upthrust perhaps a hundred feet above his head, stood the outlying shoulder of rock, crowned with its dead pine, on which he was accustomed to see the eagle sitting. Even as he looked, motionless, there came a rushing of great wings; and suddenly there was the eagle himself, erect on his high perch, and staring, as it seemed to Horner, straight into the sun.

When Horner resumed his climbing, the great bird turned his head and gazed down upon him with an ironic fixity which betrayed neither dread nor wonder. Concluding that the nest would be lying somewhere within view of its owner's watch-tower, Horner now turned his efforts towards reaching the dead pine. With infinite difficulty, and with a few bruises to arm and leg, he managed to cross the jagged crevice which partly separated the jutting rock-pier from the main face of the cliff. Then, laboriously and doggedly, he dragged himself up the splintered slope, still being forced around to the right, till there fell away below him a gulf into which it was not good for the nervous to look. Feeling that a fate very different from that of Lot's wife might be his if he should let himself look back too indiscreetly, he kept his eyes upon the lofty goal and pressed on upwards with a haste that now grew a trifle feverish. It began to seem to him that the irony of the eagle's changeless stare might perhaps not be unjustified.

Not till Horner had conquered the steep and, panting but elated, gained the very foot of the pine, did the eagle stir. Then, spreading his wings with a slow disdain, as if not dread but aversion to this unbidden visitor bade him go, he launched himself on a long, splendid sweep over the gulf, and then mounted on a spacious spiral to his inaccessible outlook in the blue. Leaning against the bleached and scarred trunk of the pine, Horner watched this majestic departure for some minutes, recovering his breath and drinking deep the cool and vibrant air. Then he turned and scanned the face of the mountain.

There it lay, in full view—the nest which he had climbed so far to find. It was not more than a hundred yards away. Yet, at first sight, it seemed hopelessly out of reach. The chasm separating the ledge on which it clung from the outlying rock of the pine was not more than twenty feet across; but its bottom was apparently somewhere in the roots of the mountain. There was no way of passing it at this point. But Horner had a faith that there was a way to be found over or around every obstacle in the world, if only one kept on looking for it resolutely enough. To keep on looking for a path to the eagle's nest, he struggled onward, around the outer slope of the buttress, down a ragged incline, and across a narrow and dizzy "saddle-back," which brought him presently upon another angle of the steep, facing south-east. Clinging with his toes and one hand, while he wiped his dripping forehead with his sleeve, he looked up—and saw the whole height of the mountain, unbroken and daunting, stretched skyward above him.

But to Horner the solemn sight was not daunting in the least.

"Gee!" he exclaimed, grinning with satisfaction. "I *hev* circumvented that there crevice, sure's death!"

Of the world below he had now a view that was almost overpoweringly unrestricted; but of the mountain, and his scene of operations, he could see only the stretch directly above him. A little calculation convinced him, however, that all he had to do was to keep straight on up for perhaps a hundred and fifty feet, then, as soon as the slope would permit, work around to his left, and descend upon the nest from above. Incidentally, he made up his mind that his return journey should be made by another face of the mountain—any other, rather than that by which he had rashly elected to come.

It seemed to Horner like a mile, that last hundred and fifty feet; but at last he calculated that he had gained enough in height. At the same time he felt the slope grow easier. Making his way towards the left, he came upon a narrow ledge, along which he could move easily sidewise, by clinging to the rock. Presently it widened to a path by which he could walk almost at ease, with the wide, wild solitude, dark green laced with silver watercourses, spread like a stupendous amphitheatre far below him. It was the wilderness which he knew so well in detail, yet had never before seen as a whole; and the sight, for a few moments, held him in a kind of awed surprise. When he tore his gaze free from the majestic spectacle, there, some ten or twelve yards below his feet, he saw the object of his quest,



"He launched himself on a long, splendid sweep over the gulf."

It was nothing much to boast of in the way of architecture, this nest of the Kings of the Air—a mere cart-load of sticks and bark and coarse grass, apparently tumbled at haphazard upon the narrow ledge. But in fact its foundations were so skilfully wedged into the crevices of the rock, its structure was so cunningly interwoven, that the fiercest winds which scourged that lofty seat were powerless against it. It was a secure throne, no matter what tempests might rage around it.

Sitting half erect on the nest were two eaglets, almost full grown, and so nearly full feathered that Horner wondered why they did not take wing at his approach. He did not know that the period of helplessness with these younglings of royal birth lasted even after they looked as big and well able to take care of themselves as their parents. It was a surprise to him, also, to see that they were quite unlike their parents in colour, being black all over from head to tail, instead of a rich brown with snow-white head, neck, and tail. As he stared, he slowly realised that the mystery of the rare "black eagle" was explained. He had seen one, once, flying heavily just above the tree-tops, and imagined it a discovery of his own. But now he reached the just conclusion, that it had been merely a youngster in its first plumage.

As he stared, the two young birds returned his gaze with interest, watching him with steady, yellow, undaunted eyes from under their flat, fierce brows; with high-shouldered wings half raised, they appeared quite ready to resent any familiarity which the strange intruder might be contemplating.

Horner lay face downward on his ledge, and studied the perpendicular rock below him for a way to reach the next. He had no very definite idea what he wanted to do when he got there; possibly, if the undertaking seemed feasible, he might carry off one of the royal brood and amuse himself with trying to domesticate it. But, at any rate, he hoped to add something, by a closer inspection, to his rather inadequate knowledge of eagles.

And this hope, indeed, as he learned the next moment, was not unjustified. Cautiously he was lowering himself over the edge, feeling for the scanty and elusive foothold, when all at once the air was filled with a rush of mighty wings, which seemed about to overwhelm him. A rigid wing-tip buffeted him so sharply that he lost his hold on the ledge. With a yell of consternation, which caused his assailant to veer off startled, he fell backwards, and plunged down straight upon the nest.

It was the nest only that saved him from instant death. Tough and elastic, it broke his fall; but at the same time its elasticity threw him off, and on the rebound he went rolling and bumping on down the steep slopes below the ledge, with the screaming of the eagles in his ears, and a sickening sense in his heart that the sunlit world tumbling and turning somersaults before his blurred sight was his last view of life. Then, to his dim surprise, he was brought up with a thump; and clutching desperately at a bush which scraped his face, he lay still. At the same moment a flapping mass of feathers and fierce claws landed on top of him, but only to scramble off again as swiftly as possible with a hoarse squawk. He had struck one of the young eagles in his fall, hurled it from the nest, and brought it down with him to this lower ledge which had given him so timely a refuge.

For several minutes, perhaps, he lay clutching the bush desperately and staring straight upwards. There he saw both parent eagles whirling excitedly, screaming, and staring down at him; and then the edge of the nest, somewhat dilapidated by his strange assault, overhanging the ledge about thirty feet above. At length his wits came back to him, and he cautiously turned his head to see if he was in danger of falling if he should relax his hold on the bush. He was in bewildering pain, which seemed distributed all over him; but in spite of it he laughed aloud, to find that the bush, to which he hung so desperately, was in a little hollow on a spacious ledge, from which he could not have fallen by any chance. At that strange, uncomprehended sound of human laughter the eagles ceased their screaming for a few moments and whirled further aloof.

With great difficulty and anguish Horner raised himself to a sitting position and tried to find out how seriously he was hurt. One leg was quite helpless. He felt it all over, and came to the conclusion that it was not actually broken; but for all the uses of a leg, for the present at least, it might as well have been putty, except for the fact that it pained him abominably. His left arm and shoulder, too, seemed to be little more than useless encumbrances, and he wondered how so many bruises and sprains could find place on one human body of no more than average size. However, having assured himself, with infinite relief, that there were no bones

broken, he set his teeth grimly and looked about to take account of the situation.

II.

THE ledge on which he had found refuge was apparently an isolated one, about fifty or sixty feet in length, and vanishing with the face of the sheer cliff at either end. It had a width of perhaps twenty-five feet; and its surface, fairly level, held some soil in its rocky hollows. Two or three dark-green seedling firs, and a slim young silver birch, a patch or two of wind-beaten grass, and some clumps of harebells, azure as the clear sky overhead, softened the bareness of this tiny, high-flung terrace. In one spot, at the back, a spread of intense green and a hand-breadth of moisture on the rock showed where a tiny spring oozed from a crevice to keep this lonely oasis in the granite alive and fresh.

At the furthest edge of the shelf, and eyeing him with savage dread, sat the young eagle which had fallen with him. Horner noticed, with a kind of sympathy, that even the bird, for all his wings, had not come out of the affair without some damage; for one of its black wings was not held up so snugly as the other. He hoped it was not broken. As he mused vaguely upon this unimportant question his pain so exhausted him that he sank back and lay once more staring up at the eagles, who were still wheeling excitedly over the nest. In an exhaustion that was partly sleep and partly coma his eyes closed. When he opened them again, the sun was hours lower and far advanced towards the west, so that the ledge was in shadow. His head was now perfectly clear; and his first thought was of getting himself back to the canoe. With excruciating effort he dragged himself to the edge of the terrace and looked down. The descent, at this point, was all but perpendicular for perhaps a hundred feet. In full possession of his powers, he would find it difficult enough. In his present state he saw clearly that he might just as well throw himself over as attempt it.

Not yet disheartened, however, he dragged himself slowly towards the other end of the terrace, where the young eagle sat watching him. As he approached, the bird lifted his wings, as if about to launch himself over and dare the element which he had not yet learned to master. But one wing drooped as if injured, and he knew the attempt would be fatal. Opening his beak angrily, he hopped away to the other end of the terrace. But Horner was paying no heed to birds at that moment. He was staring down the steep, and realising that this ledge which had proved his refuge was now his prison, and not unlikely to become also his tomb.

Sinking back against a rock, and grinding his teeth with pain, he strove to concentrate his attention upon the problem that confronted him. Was he to die of thirst and hunger on this high solitude before he could recover sufficiently to climb down? The thought stirred all his dogged determination. He *would* keep alive, and that was all there was about it. He *would* get well, and then the climbing down would be of no great matter. This point settled, he dismissed it from his consideration and turned his thoughts to ways and means. After all, there was that little thread of a spring trickling from the rock! He would have enough to drink. And as for food—how much worse it would have been had the ledge been a bare piece of rock! Here he had some grass, and the roots of the herbs and bushes. A man could keep himself alive on such things if he had will enough. And, as a last resource, there was the young eagle! This idea, however, was anything but attractive to him; and it was with eyes of good will rather than of appetite that he glanced at his fellow-prisoner sitting motionless at the other extremity of the ledge.

"It'ld be hard lines, pardner, ef I should hev to eat you, after all!" he muttered, with a twisted kind of grin. "We're both of us in a hole, sure enough, an' I'll play fair as long as I kin!"

As he mused, a great shadow passed over his head, and looking up, he saw one of the eagles hovering low above the ledge. It was the male, his old acquaintance, staring down at him from under that strange, black brow. He carried a large fish in his talons, and was plainly anxious to feed his captive young, but not quite ready to approach this mysterious man-creature who had been able to invade his eyrie as if with wings. Horner lay as still as a stone, watching through half-closed lids. The young eagle, seeing food so near, opened its beak wide and croaked eagerly; while the mother bird, larger but wilder and less resolute than her mate, circled aloof with sharp cries of warning. At last, unable any longer to resist the appeals of his hungry youngster, the great bird swooped down over him, dropped the fish fairly into his clutches, and slanted away with a hurried flapping which betrayed his nervousness.

As the youngster fell ravenously upon his

meal, tearing it and gulping the fragments, Horner drew a deep breath.

"That's where I come in, pardner," he explained. "When I kin git up an appetite for that sort of vittles, I'll go shares with you, ef y'ain't got no objection!"

Having conceived this idea, Horner was seized with a fear that the captive might presently gain the power of flight and get away. This was a thought under which he could not lie still. In his pocket he always carried a bunch of stout salmon-twine and a bit of copper rabbit-wire, apt to be needed in a hundred forest emergencies. He resolved to catch the young eagle and tether it securely to a bush.

His first impulse was to set about this enterprise at once. With excruciating effort he managed to pull off his heavy woollen hunting-shirt, intending to use it as the toreador uses his mantle, to entangle the dangerous weapons of his adversary. Then he dragged himself across to the other end of the ledge and attempted to corner the captive. For this he was not quite quick enough, however. With a flop and a squawk the bird eluded him, and he realised that he had better postpone the undertaking till the morrow. Crawling back to his hollow by the bush, he sank down utterly exhausted. Not till the sharp chill which comes with sunset warned him of its necessity, was he able to grapple with the long, painful problem of getting his shirt on again.

Through the night he got some broken sleep, though the hardness of his bed aggravated every hurt he had suffered. On the edge of dawn he saw the male eagle come again—this time more confidently and deliberately—to feed the captive. After he was gone, Horner tried to move, but found himself now, from the night's chill and the austerity of his bed, altogether helpless. Not till the sun was high enough to warm him through and through, and not till he had manipulated his legs and arms assiduously for more than an hour, did his body feel as if it could ever again be of any service to him. Then he once more got off his shirt and addressed himself to the catching of the indignant bird whom he had elected to be his preserver.

Though the anguish caused by every movement was no less intense than it had been the afternoon before, he was stronger now and more in possession of his faculties. Before starting the chase, he cut a strip from his shirt to wind around the leg of the young eagle, in order that he might be able to tether it tightly without cutting the flesh. The bird had suddenly become most precious to him!

Very warily he made his approaches, sidling down the ledge so as to give his quarry the least possible room for escape. As he drew near, the bird turned and faced him, with its one uninjured wing lifted menacingly and its formidable beak wide open. Holding the heavy shirt ready to throw, Horner crept up cautiously, so intent now upon the game that the anguish in the leg which he dragged stiffly behind him was almost forgotten. The young bird, meanwhile, waited motionless and vigilant, its savage eyes hard as glass.

At last a faint quiver and shrinking in the bird's form, an involuntary contracting of the feathers, gave warning to Horner's experienced eye that it was about to spring aside. On the instant he flung the shirt, keeping hold of it by the sleeve. By a singular piece of luck, upon which he had not counted at all, it opened as he threw it, and settled right over the bird's neck and disabled wing, blinding and baffling it completely. With a muffled squawk it bounced into the air, both talons outspread and clawing madly; but in a second Horner had it by the other wing, pulling it down, and rolling himself over upon it so as to smother those dangerous claws. He felt them sink once into his injured leg, but that was already anguishing so vehemently that a little more or less did not matter. In a few moments he had his captive bundled up with helplessness, and was dragging it to a sturdy bush near the middle of the terrace. Here, without much further trouble, he wrapped one of its legs with the strip of flannel from his shirt, twisted on a hand-length of wire, and then tethered it safely with a couple of yards of his doubled and twisted cord.

Just as he had accomplished this to his satisfaction, and was about to undo the emprisoning shirt, it flashed across his mind that it was lucky the old eagles had not been on hand to interfere. He glanced upward—and saw a dark form dropping like a thunderbolt out of the blue. He had just time to fling himself over on his back, lifting his arm to shield his face, and his foot to receive the attack, when the hiss of that lightning descent filled his ears. Involuntarily he half closed his eyes. But no shock came, except a great buffet of air on his face. Not quite daring to grapple with that ready defence, the eagle had opened its wings when within a few feet of the ledge, and swerved upward again, where it hung hovering and screaming.

Horner saw that it was the female, and shook his fist at her in defiance. Had it been his old acquaintance and challenger, the male, he felt sure that he would not have got off so easily.

Puzzled and alarmed, the mother now perched herself beside the other eaglet, on the edge of the nest. Then, keeping a careful eye upon her, lest she should return to the attack, Horner dexterously unrolled the shirt, and drew back just in time to avoid a vicious slash from the talons of his indignant prisoner. The latter, after some violent tugging and flopping at his tether and fierce biting at the wire, suddenly seemed to conclude that such futile efforts were undignified. He settled himself like a rock and stared unwinkingly at his captor.

It was perhaps an hour after this, when the sun had grown hot, and Horner, having slaked his thirst at the spring in the rock, had tried rather ineffectually to satisfy his hunger on grass-roots, that the male eagle reappeared, winging heavily from the furthest end of the lake. From his talons dangled a limp form, which Horner presently made out to be a duck.

"Good!" he muttered to himself. "I always did like fowl better'n fish."

When the eagle arrived, he seemed to notice something different in the situation, for he wheeled slowly overhead for some minutes, uttering sharp yelps of interrogation. But the appeals of the youngster at last brought him down, and he delivered up the prize. The moment he was gone Horner crept up to where the youngster was already tearing the warm body to pieces. Angry and hungry, the bird made a show of fighting for his rights; but his late experience with his invincible conqueror had daunted him. Sullenly he hopped away, the full length of his tether; and Horner picked up the mangled victim. But his appetite was gone by this time. He was not yet equal to a diet of raw flesh. Tossing the prize back to its rightful owner, he withdrew painfully to grub for some more grass-roots.

After this the eagle came regularly every three or four hours with food for the prisoner. Sometimes it was a fish—trout, or brown sucker, or silvery chub—sometimes a duck or a grouse, sometimes a rabbit or a muskrat. Always it was the male, with that grim black streak across the side of his white face, who came. Always Horner made a point of taking the prize at once from the angry youngster, and then throwing it back to him, unable to stomach the idea of the raw flesh.

At last, on the afternoon of the third day of his imprisonment, he suddenly found that it was not the raw flesh, but the grass-roots, which he loathed. While examining a fine lake-trout, he remembered that he had read of raw fish being excellent food under the right conditions. This was surely one of those right conditions. Picking somewhat fastidiously, he nevertheless managed to make so good a meal off that big trout that there was little but head and tail to toss back to his captor.

"Never mind, pardner!" he said seriously. "I'll divide fair nex' time. But you know you've been havin' more'n your share lately."

But the bird was so outraged that for a long time he would not look at these remnants, and only consented to devour them, at last, when Horner was not looking.

After this Horner found it easy enough to partake of his prisoner's meals, whether they were of fish, flesh, or fowl; and with the ice-cold water from the little spring, and an occasional mouthful of leaves and roots, he fared well enough to make progress towards recovery. The male eagle grew so accustomed to his presence that he would alight beside the prisoner and threaten Horner with that old, cold stare of challenge, and frequently Horner had to drive him off in order to save his share of the feast from the rapacity of the eaglet. But as for the female, she remained incurably suspicious and protesting. From the upper ledge, where she devoted her care to the other nestling, she would yelp down her threats and execrations, but she never ventured any nearer approach.

For a whole week the naked hours of day and dark had rolled over the peak before Horner began to think himself well enough to try the descent. His arm and shoulder were almost well, but his leg, in spite of ceaseless rubbing and applications of moist earth, remained practically helpless. He could not bear his weight on it for a second. His first attempt at lowering himself showed him that he must not be in too great haste. It was nearly a week more before he could feel assured, after experiments at scaling the steep above him, that he was fit to face the terrible steep below. Then he thought of the eaglet, his unwilling and outraged preserver! After a sharp struggle, of which both his arms and legs bore the marks for months, he caught the bird once more and examined the injured wing. It was not broken; and he saw that its owner would be able to fly all right in time, perhaps as soon as his more fortunate brother in the nest above. Satisfied on this

point, he loosed all the bonds and jumped back to avoid the indomitable youngster's retort of beak and claws. Unamazed by his sudden freedom, the young eagle flopped angrily away to the further end of the ledge; and Horner, having resumed his useful shirt, started to climb down the mountain, whose ascent he had so heedlessly adventured nearly two weeks before. As he lowered himself over the dizzy brink, he glanced up, to see the male eagle circling slowly above him, gazing down at him with the old challenge in his unwinking, golden eyes.

"I reckon you win!" said Horner, waving the imperturbable bird a grave salutation. "But you're a gentleman, an' I thank you fer your kind hospitality."

It was still early morning when Horner started down the mountain. It was dusk when he reached the lake and flung himself down, prostrated with fatigue and pain and strain of nerve, beside his canoe. From moment to moment, through spells of reeling faintness and spasmodic exhaustion, the silent gulfs of space had clutched at him, as if the powers of the solitude and the peak had but spared him so long to crush him inexorably in the end. At last, more through the sheer indomitableness of the human spirit than anything else, he had won. But never afterwards could he think of that awful descent without a sinking of the heart. For three days more he made his camp by the lake, recovering strength and nerve before resuming his journey down the wild river to the settlements. And many times a day his salutations would be waved upward to that great, snowy-headed, indifferent bird, wheeling in the far blue, or gazing at the sun from his high-set watch-tower of the pine.

III.

Two or three years later, it fell in Horner's way to visit a great city, many hundreds of miles from the grey peak of "Old Baldy." He was in charge of an exhibit of canoes, snowshoes, and other typical products of his forest-loving countrymen. In his first morning of leisure, his feet turned almost instinctively to the wooded gardens wherein the city kept strange captives, untamed exiles of the wilderness, irreconcilable aliens of fur and hide and feather, for the crowds to gape at through their iron bars.

He wandered aimlessly past some grotesque, goatish-looking deer which did not interest him, and came suddenly upon a paddock containing a bull moose, two cows, and a yearling calf. The calf looked ungainly and quite content with his surroundings. The cows were faded and moth-eaten, but well fed. He had no concern for them at all. But the bull, a splendid, black-shouldered, heavy-muffled fellow with the new antlers just beginning to knob out from his massive forehead, appealed to him strongly. The splendid, sullen-looking beast stood among his family, but towered over and seemed unconscious of them. His long, sensitive muzzle was held high to catch a breeze which drew coolly down from the north, and his half-shut eyes, in Horner's fancy, saw not the wires of his fence, but the cool, black-green fir-thickets of the north, the grey rampikes of the windy barrens, the broad lily-leaves afloat in the sheltered cove, the wide, low-shored lake-water gleaming rose-red in the sunset.

"It's a shame," growled Horner, "to keep a critter like that shut up in a seven-by-nine chicken-pen!" And he moved on, feeling as if he were himself a prisoner, and suddenly homesick for a smell of the spruce-woods.

It was in this mood that he came upon the great, dome-roofed cage containing the hawks and eagles. It was a dishevelled, dirty place, with a few uncanny-looking, dead trees stuck up in it to persuade the prisoners that they were free. Horner gave a hasty glance and then hurried past, enraged at the sight of these strong-winged adventurers of the sky doomed to so tame a monotony of days. But just as he got abreast of the further extremity of the cage, he stopped, with a queer little tug at his heart-strings. He had caught sight of a great, white-headed eagle, sitting erect and still on a dead limb close to the bars, and gazing through them steadily, not at him, but straight into the eye of the sun.

"Shucks! It ain't possible! There's millions o' bald eagles in the world!" muttered Horner discontentedly.

It was the right side of the bird's head that was turned towards him, and that, of course, was snowy white. Equally, of course, it was as Horner told himself, the height of absurdity to think that this grave, immobile prisoner gazing out through the bars at the sun, could be his old friend of the naked peak. Nevertheless, something within his heart insisted it was so. If only the bird would turn his head! At last Horner put two fingers between his mouth, and blew a whistle so piercing that everyone stared rebukingly, and a policeman came strolling along casually to see if anyone had signalled



"After this the eagle came regularly every three or four hours with food for the prisoner."

for help. But Horner was all unconscious of the interest which he had excited. In response to his shrill summons the eagle had slowly, very deliberately, turned his head, and looked him steadily in the eyes. Yes, there was the strange black bar above the left eye, and there, unbroken by defeat and captivity, was the old look of imperturbable challenge!

Horner could almost have cried, from pity and homesick sympathy. Those long days on the peak, fierce with pain, blinding bright with sun, wind-swept and solitary, through which this great, still bird had kept him alive, seemed to rush over his spirit all together.

"Gee, old pardner!" he murmured, leaning as far over the railing as he could. "But ain't you got the grit! I'd like to know who it was served this trick on you. But don't you fret. I'll git you out o' this, ef it takes a year's arnings to do it! You wait an' see!" And with his jaws set resolutely he turned and strode from the gardens. That bird should not stay in there another night if he could help it.

Horner's will was set, but he did not understand the difficulties he had to face. At first he was confronted, as by a stone wall, by the simple and unanswerable fact that the bird was not for sale at any price. And he went to bed that night raging with disappointment and baffled purpose. But in the course of his efforts and angry protestations he had let out a portion of his story—and this, as a matter of interest, was carried to the president of the society which controlled the gardens. To this man, who was a true naturalist and not a mere dry-as-dust catalogue of bones and teeth, the story made a strong appeal, and before Horner had quite made up his mind whether to get out a writ of *habeas corpus* for his imprisoned friend, or commit a burglary on the cage, there came a note inviting him to an interview at the president's office. The result of this interview was that Horner came away radiant, convinced at last that there was heart and understanding in the city as well as in the country. He had agreed to pay the society simply what it might cost to replace the captive by another specimen of his kind; and he carried in his pocket an order for the immediate delivery of the eagle into his hands.

To the practical backwoodsman there was no fuss or ceremony now to be gone through. He admired the expeditious fashion in which the keeper of the bird-house handled his dangerous charge, coming out of the brief tussle without a scratch. Trussed up as ignominiously as a turkey—proud head hooded, savage talons muffled, and skying wings bound fast, the splendid bird was given up to his rescuer, who rolled him in a blanket without regard to his dignity, and carried him off under his arms like a bundle of old clothes.

Beyond the outskirts of the city Horner had observed a high, rocky, desolate hill which seemed suited to his purpose. He took a street car and travelled for an hour with the bundle on his knees. Little his fellow-passengers guessed of the wealth of romance, loyalty, freedom, and spacious memory hidden in that common-looking bundle on the knees of the gaunt-faced, grey-eyed man. At the foot of the hill, at a space of bare and ragged common, Horner got off. By rough paths, frequented by goats, he made his way up the rocky slope, through bare ravines and over broken ridges, and came at last to a steep rock in a solitude, whence only far-off roofs could be seen, and masts, and bridges, and the sharp gleam of the sea in the distance.

This place satisfied him. On the highest point of the rock he carefully unfastened the bonds of his prisoner, loosed him, and jumped back with respect and discretion. The great bird sat up very straight, half raised and lowered his wings as if to regain his poise, looked Horner dauntlessly in the eye, then stared slowly about him and above, as if to make sure that there were really no bars for him to beat his wings against. For perhaps a full minute he sat there. Then, having betrayed no unkingly haste, he spread his wings to their full splendid width and launched himself from the brink. For a few seconds he flapped heavily, as if his wings had grown unused to their function. Then he got his rhythm, and swung into a wide, mounting spiral, which Horner watched with sympathetic joy. At last, when he was but a wheeling speck in the pale blue dome, he suddenly turned and sailed off straight towards the north-east, with a speed which carried him out of sight in a moment.

Horner drew a long breath, half wistful, half glad.

"Them golden eyes of yourn kin see a thunderin' long ways off, pardner," he muttered, "but I reckon even you can't make out the top of 'Old Baldy' at this distance. It's the eyes o' your heart ye must have seen it with, to make for it so straight!"



ASCOT STUDIES. BY FRANK CRAIG.

A LIMB OF THE LAW.

By JOHN WILLES.

CAPTAIN and Mrs. Wilkins, of 29, Cranston Street, W., were talking over the situation in a particularly hopeless state of mind. The situation was one of debt and difficulty; it was not a new one to either of them. Captain Wilkins was no novice at dealing with affairs of this sort, but each recurring "set to" appeared to come on him with new and hitherto unfamiliar surprises and effects. He had retired from an expensive and unremunerative regiment, and had endeavoured to court fickle Fortune in the shady groves of the City, but the wooing had been but a one-sided affair.

"And so, my dear," he said to his wife, "unless something turns up pretty sharp—by to-morrow, in fact—up goes the bally donkey."

"Surely something will happen to prevent the worst, Herbert," she remarked hopefully. Poor woman! she had been hopeful so often, she felt it almost an act of presumption to be so any longer. "Something *will* turn up, I feel sure."

"So do I, dearest. I wish I felt less sure. If that bill of sale isn't cleared off, Levi Phillips will send someone to-morrow to guard their interests; in other words, there will be a man in possession."

"It does seem such a pity; such nice furniture, too."

"Yes, so they think; that's why they're going to take care of it. There's the plate, too; one can scarcely call it our own. I was a fool not to make sure of that."

"Herbert, most of it was given to us. Oh, they mustn't take that!"

"Mustn't they? You tell 'em so, my dear."

"I shall," she said determinedly; and as if she felt thoroughly satisfied that this would settle them, Mrs. Wilkins announced her intention of going to bed.

"I think I will, too. Not much use, though. I'm so infernally worried, I shan't sleep. I hate lying awake and thinking, especially when thinking is useless. I'm afraid to go to bed, and I'm afraid of the morning. And that man coming, too! Nice thing for the servants to know—which of course they will when they see him, if they don't already."

"I'm afraid they do. Cook has been very trying lately. She's going, you know."

"Oh!" said Captain Wilkins in a resigned tone. "I suppose they'll all go pretty soon. Cook's departure will not break my heart. Well, I'm off." He got up and looked dismally at the clock. "Eleven; about eight to-morrow morning the entertainment will begin. Nine hours—nine hours' tossing about, thinking of it. It's enough to drive one mad. By Jingo, Kitty, I know! I'll stop that, anyway. Where's that stuff I had? You know, that sleeping stuff I took when I had neuralgia?"

Mrs. Wilkins went to the mantelpiece and took a bottle from behind the clock.

"Here it is, dear," she said. "Be careful, it's so strong."

"All right, I know," he answered. "I'll put it in my nightcap. And you'd better have some, as well." He poured out two doses, and mixing them with whisky, drank one, and held the other out to his wife.

"No, Herbert," she shook her head. "I'm afraid of it. I'll face the terrors of the night."

"Brave little woman!" he said admiringly. "You're twice the man I am. I'll drink yours as well."

"No! no! you mustn't!" She snatched the second glass away from him and put it on the sideboard. "Come along, old man, or you'll go to sleep here. Perhaps something will come with the morning."

"Perhaps," he agreed dolefully. "Ho! certainly something will come!"

They moved towards the door, he paused there and kissed her, and said he was sorry to have brought all this trouble upon her; he ought never to have married her. She laughed and said he must be asleep already, and dreaming, if he thought that she repented. Then they put out the light and

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went upstairs together, and silence and sleep came down upon this house of trouble.

* * * * *

After what he considered to be a decent interval, Mr. Henry Briggs, housebreaker, etc., who wished to take a valuation on his own account, and who also wished to take it quietly and without interruptions, approached the area gate. Opening it without much difficulty, he descended the steps. The door in the area was inhospitably closed, but another small door at right angles to it, and immediately under the front-door steps, attracted his attention and his fancy. It was fastened, of course, but a little manipulation with a sharp-pointed steel implement, which might have been made for the purpose, soon altered that.

"Hopen sesimine!" said Mr. Briggs to the door, and it immediately obeyed him. Passing through, he found himself, as he expected, in the coal-cellar. Another door beyond, as the combined efforts of tea-leaves and deceased vegetables informed him, led to the scullery. There being little or nothing to attract him in those regions, he passed quickly into the kitchen and, turning on a small electric light, looked round. Mr. Briggs was a smart young man, both by nature and in appearance, and he was quick to notice a general slovenliness and an altogether upside-down look about the place.



"'Up goes the bally donkey.'"

"Ullo!" he said. "What's the meanin' o' this 'ere? Wilkins is a stylish-lookin' bloke; an' as to 'is wife—what O! this don't look like their style. Why, there ain't been a thing washed up to-day, by the looks of it. There's the lunch, an' there's the dinner, not touched 'ardly, 'cept what they've pulled about down 'ere. An' there's the tea, an' there's"—holding it up critically—"there's a empty quartern bottle of gin, with greasy finger-marks on it. The cook's 'ad that." He took a teacup up and smelt it. "Ah, 'ad it in her tea; there's 'er bonnet on the floor, an' one of 'er boots; and there's the wrong end of a pint o' beer in that there milk-can. Hall of which tells me, without a word of a lie, that the cook drinks, an' there's trouble in the 'ouse. I do 'ope," he concluded, "that the cook an' the rest o' the domestics 'ave not been dishonest with regard to the silver."

Casually opening a drawer or two, Mr. Briggs gave a final disapproving glance round and left the kitchen. He found the usual below-stairs arrangements. Cupboards containing various articles such as brooms and pots and pans, a coal-scuttle just outside the door, over which a less practised hand would have come to grief, and another door. Looking in, he saw that it was a sort of housekeeper's room; but it did not appear to have a housekeeper belonging to it, or, if it had, she must

have been a singularly obliging one, for it was apparently a receptacle for everything that was not wanted elsewhere. There was quite a collection of dissimilar furniture. Chairs of no family likeness whatever stood one on top of the other, old boots and odd little tables huddled together in corners; there was a sofa in the middle of the room, which looked obtrusively out of place, and seemed to be trying to hide itself beneath a variety of pieces of rolled-up carpet, and mats which had grown bald in service.

Mr. Briggs shut the door, thinking it useless to waste time there, and turned towards the stairs. "Hup to now," he muttered, "I strongly disapproved of this 'ere 'ouse. If it 'adn't bin that I know they've got some decent silver, I should 'ardly think it wuth my while to continue my researchin'." With which disparaging remark he went up the stairs and into the hall. Considerable experience had made him familiar with most houses, especially of this class, so he walked straight to the dining-room, and was pleased to find that this part of the premises was an improvement on the other. The furniture was good and solid-looking. Mr. Briggs felt reassured. There was the sideboard, and on it was a handsome silver bowl with an inscription, stating that it had been presented to Captain Wilkins by his brother officers on the occasion, etc. This did not concern Mr. Briggs. It would now, he thought, be presented to him. "Spoons an' forks in the usual place, I s'pose," he said, opening the sideboard. "Ah, yes! everything Ho K. I must find somethink to pack up with." He looked round. "Ha! a nice pair o' candlesticks, I perceive halso. I b'lieve about to be presented to yours truly. An' what 'ave we 'ere? Why, I do declare this 'ere is what I call thoughtful—they've hactually bin an' left me out a drop o' whisky. Captain an' Mrs. Wilkins, you do me proud." Mr. Briggs bowed elaborately to his imaginary host and hostess, and taking the glass which the lady had left untouched, he lost no time in drinking it.

"This 'ere's a-going to be a easy job," he went on; "but I must find a bag. O' course, I know, that there room downstairs." There was a letter on the table. He picked it up and glanced over it. The contents interested him apparently. He read it again, speaking the words to himself.

"SIR,—Our clients Messrs Levi and Phillips, who hold a bill of sale on your furniture, and certain silver articles before enumerated, desire us to inform you that unless the sum due to them is liquidated on or before the 9th instant, together with all costs whatsoever, they will be reluctantly compelled to take further proceedings by placing an execution on the said furniture and silver.—We are, Sir, your obedient servants.

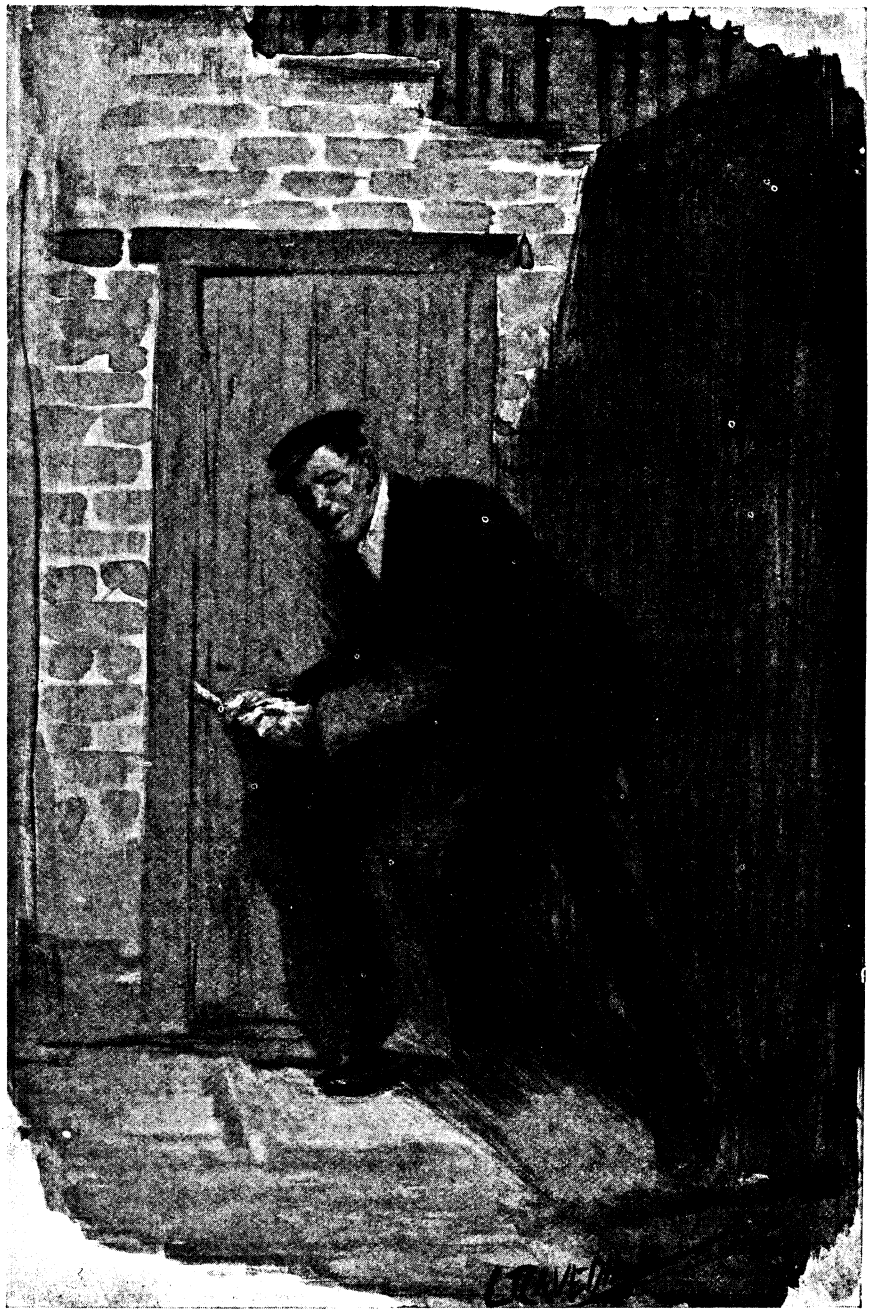
"LICKALL AND STICK."

"Oh!" said Briggs, "that's the game, is it? I thought there was somethink. Ninth instant! Why, that's to-morrow. Oh, well, if it's a-going to be hexecuted, it 'ud only be kind o' me to save what I can. I may as well 'ave it as them lawyers—oh, an' a blessed sight better. Where's that there bag? I'm a-goin' to rescue this little lot immediate."

Without further loss of time, Mr. Briggs made his way downstairs and into the lumber-room. Of course, there was everything in the place except what was wanted; but after a search he found a hamper. Rejecting this, as being too conspicuous in the street, he looked round once more, and half unconsciously sat down on the sofa. He did not see anything to suit, and fell into a train of thought about something quite irrelevant. Wondering at this, he roused himself with a start and looked round again. He felt his eyes shutting, and roused himself once more. "What's the matter?" he said. "I feel sleepy, some'ow. That won't do. What do I want—I want——" He had forgotten. He stood up and swayed slightly. "I want—I want to go to bed—to bed. What for? Bag—bed——" He swayed sideways on to the sofa and was instantly sound asleep.

* * * * *

When Mr. Briggs woke up, after some hours, his feelings were many and various, but the predominant one was thirst. He was quite unable to account for his having been overcome in such a manner, and, for the moment, was by no means certain what he had better do. He knew perfectly well where he was, and, hearing a clock strike eight, wished very heartily that he was anywhere else. He knew, of course, that any idea of gain in connection with this expedition must be abandoned; he would be lucky if he found himself in a position to try again. A wild idea dawned on him of camping where he was, until another night descended, but in view of the disturbed state of things in the family, he dismissed it as unworthy of a great, or even a mediocre, strategist. Still, something must be done, and that quickly. Escape



"'Hopen sesimine!'"

by the kitchen was impossible; it was occupied. He could hear the breaking of crockery—the cook, probably—and could smell of bacon and coffee. The cook, evidently. He looked out of the window, a melancholy square yard of garden with a despondent-looking tree, and insurmountable walls unrelieved by any sign of opening. No way there. He came to the conclusion that he must try the front door. This was about the time they swept and dusted; it might be open. Very cautiously he protruded his nose and half an eye. There

was no one outside. He slipped past the kitchen and up the stairs. At the top he listened. There was no sound. In a second he was in the hall. It was empty. He looked towards the door. It was open, and on the steps was the housemaid with a broom, and the baker. He was about to retreat downstairs again, when there was a loud crash from the bottom. The cook, and the breakfast. He made a swift dash for the nearest door and opened it. He found himself in the library; it was also occupied by the master of the house.

Mr. Briggs's nerves were in a capital condition, but he felt that he wanted every fibre. He thought of flight, naturally, but there was nowhere to fly. He was not quite certain whether he turned pale or blushed; all he knew was that he felt very uncomfortable. The most surprising thing was that the other occupant of the room also appeared to be very ill at ease himself; there was no doubt about him, he certainly did turn pale.

"Oh!" he began nervously—"good morning. You're here, then?"

Mr. Briggs said afterwards that he believed he answered "Yes" or "No"; he is not quite certain which.

"You'll find everything all right; nothing has been removed, I assure you."

"No, no, sir," stammered the astonished Briggs, "nothink."

"You've looked round, then, I suppose? Quite right."

"Yes, sir, I 'ave; 'tain't no use denyin' it."

"Denying it? No. Why should you? It's your business, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir, o' course it's my business. There's nothink gone, I'm sure o' that, sir; not a fork nor a spoon."

"Of course not; who would be likely to take them, except yourself? If anything is taken, you'll see to it, won't you?"

"Not now, sir."

"No, not now; when the time comes. You're used to handling things, I've no doubt."

"It ain't altogether my fault, sir."

"No, it's mine, I suppose. Have you breakfasted? If not, you'd better do it. I don't care what you do. This is the way to the kitchen; that will suit you, won't it?"

And with that the agitated Mr. Briggs was ushered to the back stairs, and told to interview the cook.

"Wait a minute, though," continued the Captain, reflecting. "I'm not going to have any more guests. One's enough at a time. Cook," he called down the stairs, "lock that back door and bring me the key; and you do the same to the front door. Take that infernal broom downstairs, and show this man the kitchen," he said to the housemaid, who came in hurriedly, locked the door, and disappeared with Briggs and the broom.

This last order, coming on the top of other disconcerting events, so flustered him that Briggs, who was by no means shy with ladies, quite forgot to pay the customary attentions, when he found himself alone with the housemaid, but followed her to the kitchen wrapped in gloomy thoughts. As he was a good-looking young man, this seemed rather strange to the lady, who paused at the bottom of the stairs expectantly. There being still no signs of an attack, however, she went on again, merely remarking—

"Well, you *are* quiet!

"'Ere, cook," she said, on entering, "'ere's a young man come to pay an afternoon call."

"Good mornin'," said the lady addressed, who was breakfasting off a bottle of stout. "You must make yourself at 'ome. We knows. We ain't fools, nor yet hidiots, are we, Louisa?"

"Not 'alf," responded the other, and they both laughed.

"'Oo's suit?" went on the cook, who knew something of these matters.

"Why, mine, o' course. Don't you like it?" said Briggs, who felt more at home here.

"Ho! ain't you funny?" she retorted, and they both laughed again. "What's all this lockin' o' doors for? I never 'eard the like. We ain't thieves, I s'pose, nor yet burglars, are we, Mr.——? What's your name, by the way?"

"Briggs," he answered, "'Enry Briggs." He might as well be truthful, he thought; it couldn't do much harm in this case.

"I s'pose you're used to this sort of thing?" asked Louisa, smiling at him. She liked his looks and intended that he should make amends for his neglect on the stairs.

"What sort o' thing?" Briggs's thoughts were a little astray.

"Why, this comin' into 'ouses—other people's 'ouses, and all that."

"Ho, yes; but I ain't used to company in 'em. I mean——" Briggs felt he had better change the subject—"I mean ladies' company. You know—I say—the bloke said somethink about breakfast; I'm parched."

"Are ye? I'll get ye some tea if you're good."

"Go on," interrupted the cook, "'e don't

want tea. There's a couple o' bottles o' stout in the coal-scuttle. I got 'em in case I felt queer. The 'ouse is so hupset, I feel quite faint now. 'Ere," said the hospitable woman, putting them on the table, "'elp yourself. I'm goin' to 'ave another. I'm fit to drop."

"Thanks," said the guest with alacrity. "This is all right."

"Oh," continued the hostess, "don't you be afraid. They'll be goin' out presently, then we'll 'ave somethin' better. I s'pose you'll be 'ere a day or two."

"A day or two!" Mr. Briggs returned suddenly to the facts of the situation; he had been lulled into a false security. "A day or two? I 'ope not! Ain't 'e goin' to unlock that there door?"

"I don't care if 'e do or not," said Louisa. "We'll 'ave a fine time, won't we, eh?" and the bashful maiden smote Mr. Briggs playfully on the cheek.

"I shall," thought that gentleman, "if I don't git out o' this." "I shall 'ave to be goin' soon, reely," he continued aloud; "I've bin 'ere too long a'ready."

"Why, you can't go till you're paid, any'ow," put in the cook, "an' that'll take 'em all their time."

"Paid! what for?"

"What for? You know yer own business, don't you?"

"Yes, but I ain't generally paid for it; not fust 'and."

"What did they put ye in for, then, if you ain't to wait for the money? 'Ave another drop o' stout; you seem worried."

Mr. Briggs took another drop and pondered. His reception was so unusual that there must be some reason for it. The master upstairs, and now the maids below. In a flash it came across him—he was mistaken for the broker's man.

"Struth!" ejaculated Mr. Briggs.

"What's that you say?" said the women.

"Nothink; nothink of any consequence. I was only thinkin'."

At this moment the bell rang.

"Oh, bother!" said Louisa. "I must go, I s'pose. Look after 'im, Cookey, till I come back. Don't go makin' love, now"; and with this injunction, the engaging young lady departed.

"Nice gal," remarked Briggs. "B'lieve I've seen 'er before somewheres. Wonder where?"

"She's well enough. Now she's gone, we'll 'ave a drop o' brandy. My 'ealth's so bad I'm obliged to take precautions; but I don't let 'er know," and she produced a small bottle from the tea-caddy. "'Elp yourself, my dear; I like you."

Mr. Briggs thought that he was getting on very well, but that he had better be careful, so he declined the brandy, on the plea of its being early.

"Early?" said the cook. "Well, you are a funny one! I've met them in your line afore now, an' I never knew 'em refuse to drink, early or late. You don't look like 'em, neither," surveying him critically. "You're too good-lookin'."

Briggs bowed elaborately, but the compliment didn't put him any more at his ease.

Just then Louisa came back, and the cook took the opportunity to conceal the bottle.

"Oh, I saw it, my dear!" laughed the girl. "They want you upstairs. I expect they're going to rise your wages. You was to go up at once."

"If they smell the brandy, they'll think I drink, I s'pose. Well, we're all leavin', so it don't matter. 'Ave what you like, Mr. Briggs. I shan't be long."

"I'm glad she's gone," remarked the young lady. "Well, 'ow do you like this place? Feel comfortable, do you?"

"Oh, very," said Briggs; "never been more so. You are all so kind and so 'omely. I wish all my adventures was like this."

"Do you 'ave many adventures, then?"

"No, 'ardly any. I'm beginnin' to think this is goin' to be one, though."

"You've got to stop 'ere an' look after things, 'aven't you?"

"Well, so I'm told."

"You look after me, then; that's enough for you."

Mr. Briggs was inclined to agree with her, and said so.

After this, there was an awkward silence. His thoughts refused to concentrate themselves on the fair lady, they kept harking back to his extremely delicate position, which, though pleasant enough in one way, was, in another, most uncertain. The real official might arrive at any moment, and he had no desire to make his acquaintance.

Louisa noticed his abstraction, and by no means approved.

"You *are* quiet," she said. "What's the matter?"

"The fact is, my dear, I'm a good bit worrited. There's a dear friend o' mine as wants me very particular—I hought to be with 'im now. I wonder if I could get out o' that there window if you was to keep quiet?"

"Out o' the window? Whatever do you mean? You're a funny sort o' broker's man. I can't make you out. An' me so fond of you, too. I've took such a fancy to you the very minute I see *you*, I says to myself: 'That's my hero, that is. I don't care what else 'e is. That's my 'ero.' And you don't care a bit." With this, Louisa burst out crying on his neck.

Briggs felt that things were not improving.

"'Ush, 'ush, my love! Don't give way." He tried, without much success, to pacify her.

"You want to leave me, you crool man! You want to fly from me out of the window, you do, that's all. I'll scream the 'ouse down! You stop 'ere, an' mind me, an' your business."

Briggs lost his temper, and his head, and said—

"Hang the business! 'Tain't mine at all."

"What do you mean, you cruel wretch? Ain't you a broker's man?"

Mr. Briggs saw his mistake, and floundered.

"No—well, yes, I'm a sort o'—that is, I dunno what I am—I wish I was anywheres else. No, I ain't, I'm a tradesman."

"Tradesman?" The girl seemed mystified. "What sort o' tradesman?"

"P'leeceman," said Briggs in desperation.

To his surprise the girl screamed.

"P'leeceman! Now I know where I see you before—Pontefract Square, on a Saturday night. You took my young man, what I'd let in to look round a bit. You tied 'im to a chair an' went away, an' never come back; and the silver went the same time."

She referred to a former transaction of Mr. Briggs's. He put his hand on her mouth in great alarm.

"Quiet, for 'Eaven's sake! What was your young man doin' there?"

"You know what 'e was he doin' well enough. I b'lieve you're in the same line. Oh! my 'art is breaking! Whatever made me take up with you, you wicked man? An' you not the first! Oh, my 'art!"

Briggs saw a chance.

"Louisa, steady yourself, Louisa."

"Oh, my 'art—to go throwin' of it away like this!"

Briggs took her in his arms with fervour.

"D'ye love me, Louisa?"

"You know I do; I can't 'elp it. You're so fantastic, ain't ye?"

"Yes, o' course I am. You'll help me to git out o' this? You won't give me away? If you do, ye know, I can round on you for lettin' that man into Pontefract Square."

"I won't give you away, 'Enry—not if you love me, as you say you do."

Mr. Briggs had made no statement to that effect, but he lost no time in doing so.

"Kiss me proper, then," said the girl.

He did so to the best of his ability. The cook was heard descending the stairs.

"Pals now, remember," whispered Briggs.

"Yes," answered Louisa. "You won't forget me? You'll see me again?"

"Rather! Wait till this 'ere trouble's over. I love ye, you remember that. You're pretty and you're sharp. I dessay you an' me might be very useful to one another, Loo."

He kissed her hurriedly as the cook entered in tears.

"I can't stand that woman no 'ow," she began, taking the bottle out of its open hiding-place. "She do upset me so. I've never bin spoke to so before—no, not by the nobilities. An' 'er 'usband a mere captain! Tellin' me I drink, an' before 'im too! I'm glad I'm goin'. I'm sure they'll be sorry, an' hunt 'igh and low before they find me again. My feelin's won't stand it. An' them with the brokers in too!" She wept bitterly.

"'Oo are you callin' brokers?" said Louisa.

"Well, ain't 'e?" demanded the cook fiercely, wiping her eyes with a corner of the tablecloth. "If 'e ain't, what is 'e? You seem friendly enough, you do. You ain't been long."

"Don't you take no notice of 'er," broke in Louisa angrily. "It always upsets 'er to go upstairs. I find the missis right enough. I make no complaints of 'er at all. Me an' 'er's very good friends; and master too—you mind that," she said to Briggs pointedly. "We're very good friends, we are; and mind that, an' you'll please me."

"An' you'll please me," said the cook mockingly. "Ho, I *am* glad! You'll have me to the weddin', I s'pose. I quite forgot, I've been so upset. I quite forgot to tell you, Mr. Briggs, that Captain Wilkins an' 'is lady was wishful o' your company upstairs."

"What, me?" said Briggs. "Heavens! Whatever's up now, I wonder? Well, I'll go." He appeared in no way pleased to do so. "For the present, ladies." He rose.

Louisa went to the door with him, letting him go reluctantly.

"Young 'earts, young 'earts!" murmured the sarcastic cook.

"That's more than you got," retorted Louisa; then to Briggs: "Remember, very good friends, an' master too."

She seemed quite anxious to impress it on him.



"'Ere's a young man."

"I'll remember," and Mr. Briggs went up the stairs with feelings which grew in uneasiness at each one he mounted. He knocked at the dining-room door, and being told to come in, entered with a beating heart. The scene was not cheerful.

Captain Wilkins was seated with a great wealth of accounts before him, looking at them gloomily. Mrs. Wilkins sat looking at him through a perfect veil of tears.

"Bless my soul!" said Briggs to himself, "'ow these women can 'owl!"

"Sit down, Mr.——"

"Briggs, sir."

"Ah, yes, Briggs," began the Captain.

Mr. Briggs was so flustered that he sat down on a dumb-waiter near the door, and nearly upset it. He started up in great alarm and dropped his hat; in recovering himself, after fishing for it, he knocked his head violently against the table, under which it had rolled, and backed away into the dumb-waiter again, which, this time, did upset; he snatched at it to save its fall, and jerked a lot of plates and cups and saucers half-way across the room. All this tended to make him still more ill at ease, if possible. Mrs. Wilkins screamed faintly.

"Never mind the blessed things," said her husband. "Sit down, I tell you, on a chair. We may as well use 'em whilst we've got any."

Mr. Briggs at length found a resting-place, in a corner, and heartily wished he was dead. Quiet being then restored, the Captain began once more.

"This is an extremely disagreeable state of things, Mr. Briggs."

Mr. Briggs agreed most readily.

"In fact," he went on, "it is not to be endured. I may as well tell you that I shall endeavour by every means in my power to avoid enduring it. By fair means or foul. Do you follow me? Fair means or *foul*."

"Hor foul," echoed the wretched Briggs. "Quite right, sir."

"I'm glad you think so. As far as the furniture is concerned, I don't care. If it must go, why, there's an end of it. You can't deny that?"

"No, sir, I can't."

"I've been anxiously expecting a cheque, which would settle the whole thing. The cheque has not arrived as yet. Therefore, Mr. Briggs, I am not only on my beam-ends, so to speak, but I am also on my mettle, and I stop at nothing."

"You stops at nothink; I see, sir."

"Oh, you see, do you? I'm glad of that. There's some silver on the sideboard, and there's some more in it. I'm not going to lose that."

"I should 'ope not," said Briggs quickly. He took an interest in silver.

"There are a lot of pots, as you see, which I worked for and value; and there are other things which Mrs. Wilkins values. It's your duty, I believe, to see that they are not removed. Are you very much devoted to duty, Mr. Briggs? Because they're going to be removed, whether you like it or not."

Mr. Briggs was about to say that nothing would give him greater pleasure, but he remembered his new profession and felt that he must stick to his guns.

"I can't allow nothink to be moved, sir, without orders."

"The orders may go to blazes! I said fair means or foul. You won't allow me, you say. You observe those very handsome silver cups and other ornaments. I won them, Mr. Briggs. Do you know how?"

"No, sir, I do not."

"With these," said the Captain, holding his fists under Mr. Briggs's nose and working them backwards and forwards.

"Reely, sir!" said Briggs. "'Ow interestin'!"

"Isn't it?" said the other. "Listen. In the years '97 and '98, when I was in India with my regiment, I was amateur middle-weight champion, not only of India, but of the British Army. I have not forgotten all I knew yet, and I'm not going to lose that silver."

To the Captain's surprise, Mr. Briggs jumped up and insisted on shaking hands with him; he seemed quite at his ease again, and his face beamed.

"Bless me, sir," he said, "I'm pleased to know ye. Well, this is a game. I knew I'd 'eard of you somewhere. I am glad to see you; I've often wanted to. Why, them two years as you mentions, didn't you ever 'ear of Tyke Bashford, as was perfeshional middle-weight champion of Hengeland. That's me, that is. I've changed my name since then. I 'ad to, for nearly killin' two soldiers. But I'm as good as I was, every hinch; an' I'd feel proud to 'ave a round or two with you, sir. I won't 'urt yer."

Captain Wilkins' face fell. "I'm very please to meet you, Mr. Briggs—or Bashford, but I don't think a round or two would mend matters just now. I shan't get the silver out that way. We must try another."

Just then the door opened, and a pair of red eyes and a still redder nose announced the cook.

"Would you be wishin' me to take the breakfast things away, please?" she asked with great hauteur. "I'm not wishin' to neglect my duties whilst I *am* 'ere, but I should wish to leave immediate. I 'ave no more to say."

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Wilkins wearily, "take them away."

"And take yourself away as soon as you like afterwards!" shouted the Captain, who appeared to be driven furious by the sight of the woman. "Come, my dear—and you, too, Briggs; we can talk this over in the library."

"Would you be pleased to 'and me the key of the back door, please? Hi 'ave not bin accustomed to livin' in a fortress nor yet a Tower of London. Hand I am goin' as soon as these 'ere very things is put away."

"Take the key and go!" said the Captain, and led the way into the library, where the discussion was at once renewed.



"'Quiet!'"

"Well, now, Mr. Briggs, it's no use my trying to take the silver by force, so we must try persuasion."

Mr. Briggs was so delighted with his new acquaintance that he almost said: "Take it with my blessin'," but he didn't. The words, "trying to take the silver," had set him thinking on his own account. If it had to be taken anywhere, it must be taken *out*. Mr. Briggs thought he would lie low.

"Will you have a drink?" inquired Captain Wilkins. "You're not in training now, I suppose?"

Mr. Briggs replied with alacrity that he 'oped not.

"Ring the bell, then, and we'll get to business."

Briggs rang and Louisa appeared.

"Bring the whisky and some soda-water."

Louisa having done so, Mrs. Wilkins said she was so upset, she would go to her room, telling the girl to come with her, for she was afraid to be alone. "Has the cook gone?" she asked.

"Not yet, ma'am; she's packin' up."

"I shall be so glad when she has," and they went upstairs.

"Now, then, Mr. Briggs, you are determined to keep an eye on those things?"

Mr. Briggs said he was quite determined.

"Are you very much attached to your profession? It's not much of a one, is it? What's it worth to you?"

Briggs not having the remotest idea, was obliged to guess. He said he supposed about five hundred a year.

"Not so much as that, surely?"

"Well, p'raps not. Between that and one 'undred. I don't think much of it, sir. I

shall chuck it after this. It ain't my line."

"Well, now, look here. Suppose I put you up to something that is in your line—a nice little berth at a sporting club, eh? Would you throw over the other?"

"You try me, sir!"

"You would, I take it? In that case, do you think you could give your honesty a slight wrench now and take a bribe?"

"I might try, sir; there's no knowin'. What would the bribe amount to?"

"You let me take that silver away now, and I'll give you ten pounds."

Mr. Briggs pondered and asked for time. Captain Wilkins agreed and walked to the window. He was just in time to see the cook departing in a four-wheeler, with her box on the top.

Meanwhile his companion's thoughts took this form. If the silver was to be moved, he would like to do it himself. It seemed within the range of possibility that he might work it. If he failed, there was still the ten pounds.

"It's this way, sir," he began. "Ye see, they know you about 'ere; an' if I was to let you go out with a bag or anythink like that, an' a pleeceman or anyone as knows you was to see you, where am I going to be? I dunno that it don't mean prison for me. I can't risk it, not for you nor no one. But I'll tell you what, sir, I've fought straight every time. There's no one can't say I ain't honest." He blushed slightly when he said this. "I does odd jobs in a parson's 'ouse, when I ain't on this lay. I'll give you the address o' the parson o' this parish." He knew it well. "An' I'll do this. I can slip out without no notice bein' took. An' if you'll give me five pounds, I'll take that there silver, an' leave it for you anywhere you like."

A postman's knock sounded as he made this generous offer.

"That's a very good plan," said the Captain. "I'll think it over. Let's see what this letter is." He went to the front door.

"Will he do it?" said Briggs anxiously. He heard an exclamation in the hall, and went out. Captain Wilkins was at the bottom of the stairs, calling for his wife excitedly. She came running down. He kissed her and waved a letter in front of her.

"We're saved, darling! We're saved! Here's the cheque at last!"

"The cook's gone, sir," said Louisa.

"Hang the cook!" replied the Captain. "Come into the dining-room, Briggs; we'll drink her a speedy journey."

They went into the dining-room. The silver had gone also.

THE GUEST-CHAMBER.

I HAVE thrown wide the portals of my life
And fastened back the curtains, that the sun
May fill the room with light and warmth, and throw
A golden twilight when the day is done.

I shall not close my door because one guest,
However great, has gone; nor let the rust
Upon the hearth accumulate; the floor
Each day grow whiter with untrodden dust.

BETH SLATER WHITSON.



ABOUT TIME.

DOROTHY: Can I have some water to christen my doll, mamma?
MOTHER: Oh, no, I don't like you to play with water.
DOROTHY: Well, can I have some wax to waxinate her? I'm sure she ought to have something done by now—I've had her three months.

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

HINTS TO AEROPLANISTS.

THERE seems to be a general opinion that in a few years—the exact number is wisely left indefinite—we shall all be flying about in air-ships. It follows that advice to aeroplanists will shortly be much needed, and I take this opportunity to call attention to my forthcoming book, "The Complete Aeroplanist: with an appendix containing consolatory observations to those rendered incomplete owing to their devotion to the art." Or I may call it, "The A B C of Aeroplaning," or "The Aeroplanist's Vade Mecum." It ought to have been out before now, but there has been some disappointment about the advertisement pages. The gentleman into whose hands this important branch of book-making was entrusted writes me that beyond the business cards of five undertakers, four makers of artificial limbs, three makers of artificial memorial wreaths, two makers of tombstones, and a crematorium—I'm not sure if that's the right word, but I mean a company willing and able to pack you away in a nice little urn that will make your widow's mantelpiece look very *recherché*—he has failed to gain the support of the commercial world towards my work. Wake up, England! How can our industries flourish when the cream of our traders neglect such opportunities of bringing their wares before the notice of the public? I ask readers how can I bring out my book when the advertisers one and all take such a lugubrious view of what is really a delightful and exhilarating pastime? I have been careful to write it in a bright, cheery style, and I really must have a few bright, cheery advertisements to go with it.

"The Complete," etc., is divided into five sections: I. Preliminary Remarks, II. The Start, III. Flying, IV. Alighting, V. Afterwards.

The work is designed to meet all classes and tastes. For instance, in the first section there is a charming little speech describing the joys of aeroplaning. It rises almost to lyric heights, and is written specially for a nephew to say to an uncle, or, indeed, any relative of either sex from whom he has expectations. He concludes

by presenting him (or her) with a ticket available for an aeroplane crossing the Channel or sailing from London to Birmingham. And there is also a speech declining the gift, worded so tactfully that it cannot give offence.

Then there is the question of costume. This is treated very fully. The aeroplanist should be prepared for all emergencies. A suit of pneumatic indiarubber overalls is recommended, one with a hood and mask to protect the head and face. Also a dandy little parachute hung over the shoulder, which expands automatically when circumstances render it necessary.

Any little knicknacks such as scent bottles, beer bottles, opera and other glasses, umbrellas, soap, knives, forks, plates, hams, tinned goods—in short, any paraphernalia lying loose in the aeroplane—should bear no distinguishing mark. They may have to be jettisoned in a hurry, and if they fall on a cow or an old gentleman's toe, and a claim for damages arises—you see the point?

I pass on to the start. The passengers' deportment should be replete with dignity and calm courage. Practise expressions before the looking-glass, and be careful to assume a smile that won't come off so long as the machine remains on the ground. A choice collection of "Good-bye" speeches is included in this part.

In the flying section I give plenty of valuable advice. The driver and the mechanician – aeroplanes will probably carry both—should practise using the handles while the machine is on solid ground. There will be levers for tilting it to starboard or port, or elevating or depressing the bow. If the machine is heeling over to starboard, pull the port lever; if you pull the starboard, you'll spill the passengers and yourself out of the aeroplane, and they will probably subsequently reprove you for your clumsiness. It is by remembering little details like this that aeroplanists get the full fun out of their hobby.



"WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

ATTENDANT: These 'ere's crows, and them's sea-birds.
LADY DE VERE: Oh! Have you a razorbill?
ATTENDANT (coyly): Pard'n, miss, my name's Fred.

Perhaps the most important part of aeroplaning is alighting. It spoils all the enjoyment to finish with what newspaper boys call a "shocking tragedy." Come down gently, never be in a hurry. Of course, one day the aeroplane will alight at its station as naturally and tenderly as a South-Eastern train will stop at (or between) its stations, but it's no use blinking the fact—that day has not come yet. The thoughtful driver, if he finds he *has* to come down, will try to descend as near a hospital as possible—every hospital should fly a flag as a beacon for the aeroplanist. It is a mistake to alight in a main



A LITTLE MIXED.

FOND MOTHER: Yes, sir, and only ten months old! Ain't he a beauty?
ANGLER (absent-mindedly): Indeed, ma'am, it is! How long will it live out of water?



NOT NECESSARY.

"You never come to the Club now, do you?"
"No, my wife's away from home!"

street; roadway authorities object to their being messed up by aeroplanes and their passengers, for there is no doubt the aeroplane is an untidy machine—it likes to come down anyhow, and sits on its propeller or smashes its starboard strake with equal indifference.

The last section is composed almost entirely of little sentences which the aeroplanist will find handy when he reaches earth again. I append specimens—

"How nice you look, nurse!"

"Can you kick with your artificial leg?"

"Does the artificial arm fit?"

"It is a libel to say his nose was knocked an inch to the right."

"How fortunate the driver (or mechanician) was not married." Alternative sentence: "We must write the widow a nice letter of sympathy."

"How did the Accident Insurance Company behave?"

"When do you hope to get out in a bath-chair?"

The Appendix, which, as I said previously, is specially written to cheer aeroplanists who have come to grief owing to their machine alighting in a hurry, simply reeks with humour. It contains an assortment of jokes—well-matured jokes which music-hall comedians have tested on audiences for years past.

Charles D. Leslie.

CLUB CROQUET.

He **was keen on the game,**
But *she* wanted flirtation.
Her heart was aflame
And croquet seemed tame,
But her nonchalant aim
Made him squirm with vexation.
He **was keen on the game,**
But *she* wanted flirtation.

The tables were turned
When the game was concluded.
For her fondness he yearned
With a fervour that burned,
But his ardour she spurned
Till he fretted and brooded.
The tables were turned
When the game was concluded.

For she strolled from the rest,
And forbade him to follow.
Could he only have guessed
The pain in her breast,
His suit he'd have pressed;
But instead life grew hollow,
For she strolled from the rest
And forbade him to follow.

Jessie Pope.



THE POINT OF VIEW.

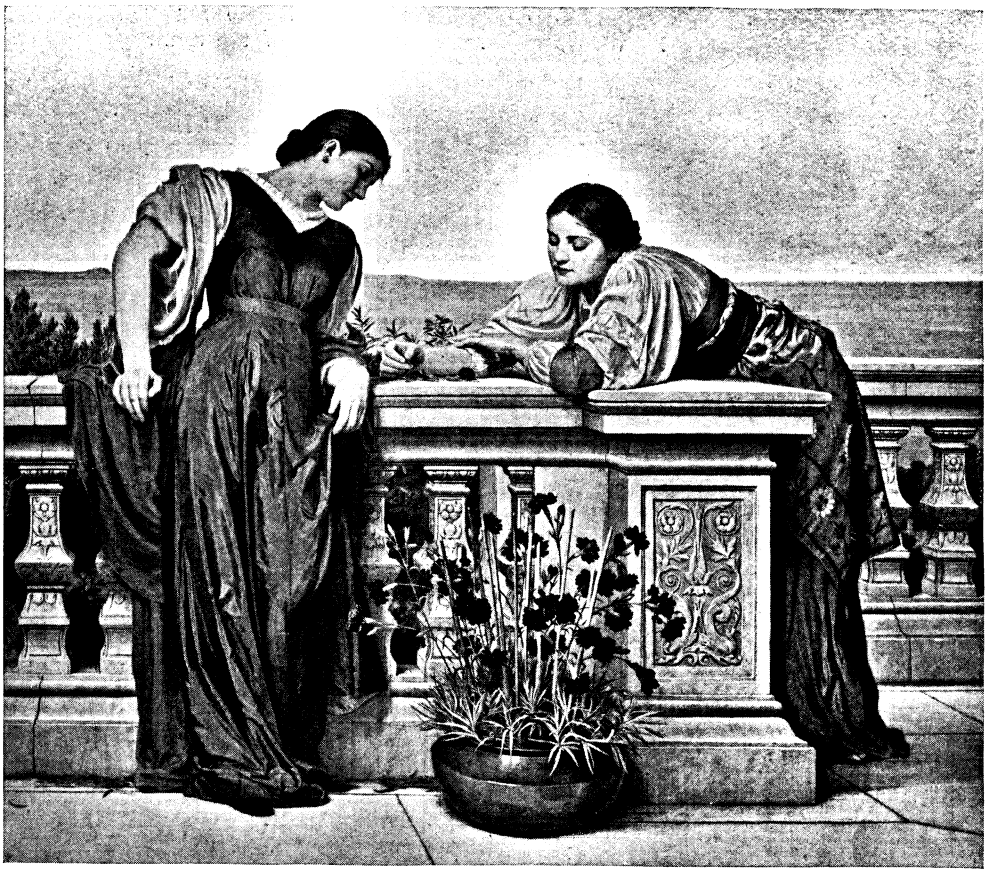
HE: I don't intend to get married until I am over thirty.

SHE: I don't intend to get over thirty until I am married.



"FIRST WORDS OF LOVE." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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"DOLCE FAR NIENTE." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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THE ART OF C. E. PERUGINI.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

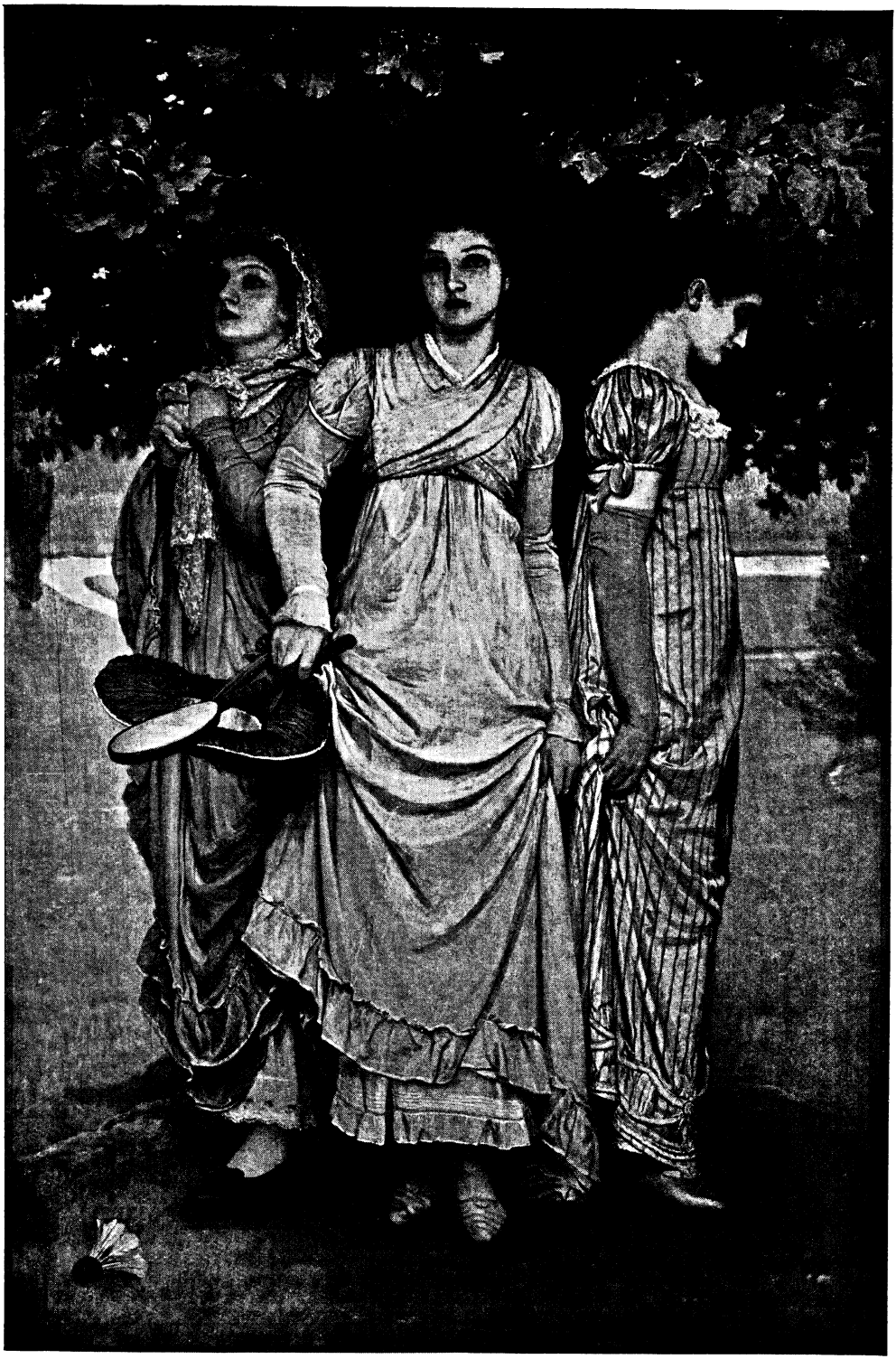
THERE are few subjects round which have arisen a greater number of diverse opinions than that of beauty. Arguments as to the meaning of the word are as diverse as those expressed on love by Voltaire and Lord Bacon. The French philosopher wrote below a statue of Cupid: "Whoever you are, this god is your master, or if he has not as yet become so, so will he be," whilst the English statesman held the sentiment in such contempt that he wrote of it: "Great spirit and great business do keep out this weak passion." "Beauty" in the dictionary, if one turns to Annandale, is described as "an assemblage of perfections through which an object is rendered pleasing to the eye; those qualities in the aggregate that give pleasure to the æsthetic sense; qualities that delight the eye, the ear, or the mind; loveliness; elegance; grace; a particular grace or ornament; that which is beautiful; a part which surpasses in beauty that with which it is united; a beautiful person, especially a beautiful woman"—definitions not one of which enables us to form any theory as to the word's actual properties. Some few of them, indeed, seem opposed to our conception of what is at best but an inductive science, which inclines us to say of an object:

"It pleases us, therefore it is beautiful." Yet this is no argument at all. We take especial exception to the definition: "A particular grace or ornament," for ornament, if we turn to the word in the same authority, is given as meaning that which embellishes; and we know, from no less an artist than Michael Angelo, that purgation of superfluities or embellishments is one of the high qualities of beauty.

If we turn to the poets for a definition of beauty, we come upon a conflict of opinions. Keats confounds it with truth—"Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know," a most misleading statement. Shakespeare held it as but a vain and doubtful good that lived side by side with kindness; and those *savants* who sought to reduce beauty to a scientific problem have failed to remove ambiguity from the meaning of the term. One writer limits its province to the inner life, to certain ideals and emotions; another holds it as entirely objective, and a third considers it as combination of both the former theories, holding the effects of objective beauty *nil* without the reciprocity of the subjective sense. It is to ancient Greece that we must refer for first speculations on this theme. Xenophon regarded the beautiful as coincident with the good, and both as resolvable into utility. Socrates emphasised the power of beauty as furthering the more necessary ends of life, and considered such works of art as pictures rather purposeless, as hindering enjoyment, because of the space they took from useful objects. Plato appears to have



"A SEA NYMPH." BY C. E. PERUGINI.
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"A SUMMER SHOWER." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

From the picture in the Public Art Gallery, Hull, reproduced, by permission of the Corporation of Hull, from the large plate published by the Autotype Company, New Oxford Street, W.

appreciated a work of art as an independent end in human life, and culture, although the idea of beauty, with its almost inadequate realisation in our visible world, holds, in his most abstract speculations, "the clearest instance of the relation of the human mind to reality and truth." Before his time, indeed, there had been but little theorising about the place occupied by the beautiful in life. He was the first to anticipate the view that art is justified by itself, the first to theorise on "art for art's sake," and to see that it has no purpose but itself, its own perfection.

Coming to more modern times, we are faced by a tradition of a treatise on the beautiful by St. Augustine, in which Platonic ideas are dressed in Christian garb. Then, skipping many decades, we enter upon the speculations of the German philosophic school.

France, in the æsthetic fields, brought far fewer writers than did other countries, but Diderot thought to define beauty by making it consist of the true perception of relations. Batteux tried to elucidate it by means of the words "imitation of Nature," and Taine, in his work, "De l'Ideal dans l'Art," places the value of a work of art high rather in consequence of its likeness to a model of high physical perfection than in consequence of any high aim on the part of the artist.

England has not been without her exponents of æstheticism. We have Lord Shaftesbury, whose views are Platonic in character, and Hutchesson, who holds similar opinions, though totally opposed to those expressed by Taine, in that he considers that portrayed beauty lies rather with the artist than with the subject. Reid's theory of beauty is purely spiritual; Hamilton founds his on that of Aristotle; Sir Joshua Reynolds technically reduces beauty to its elements; and Ruskin, in his usual desultory manner, puts vague, emotional ideas into his accustomed musical English. Writers having, then, failed in their attempts to make charts which shall reveal to us in what locality beauty really lies, it is to painters we have to look for more definite guidance.

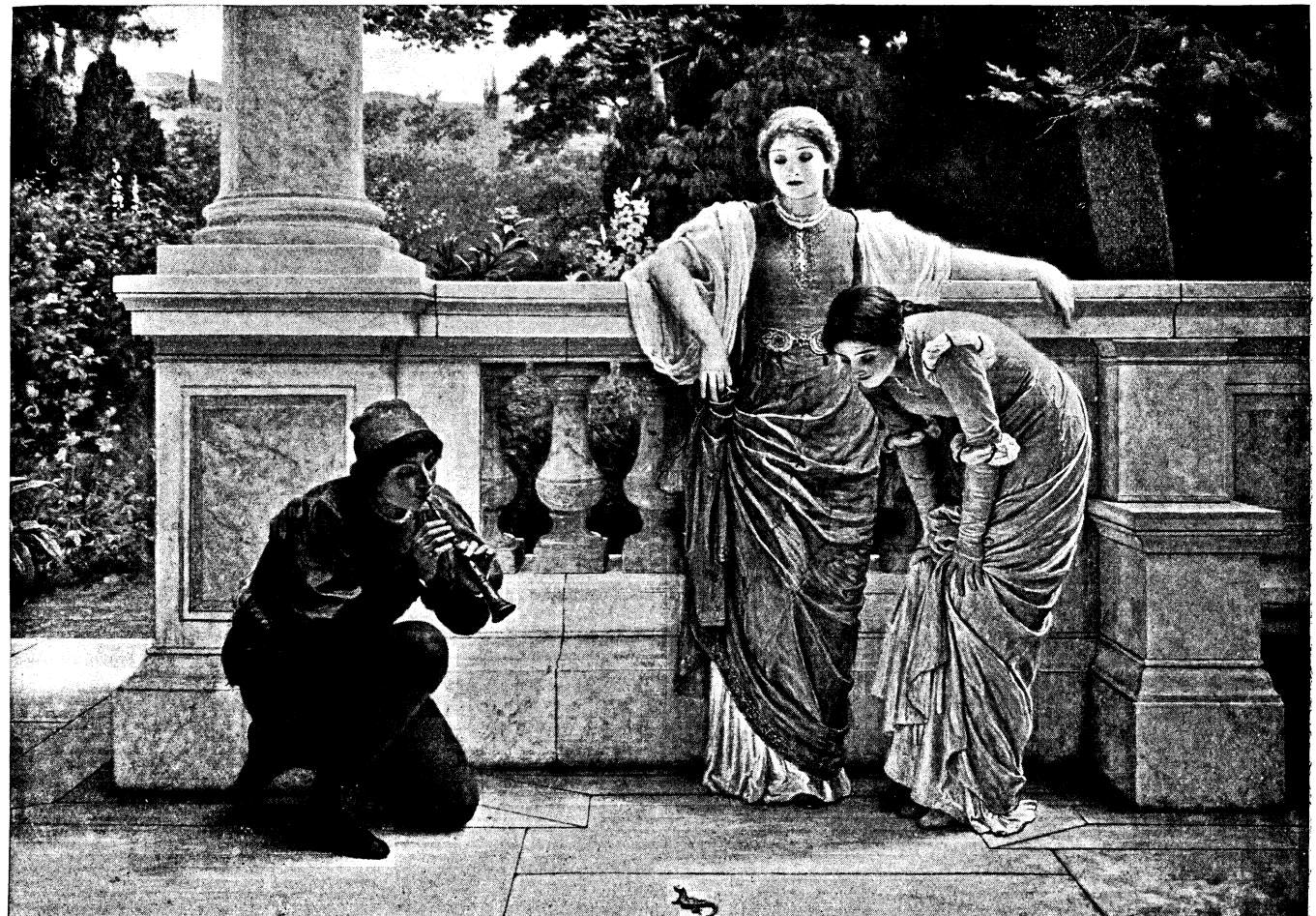
Yet even should painters chance to find beauty in one of the many forms in which it exists, it is but in fragments that they are able to show us, through the medium of their personality, the result of their search; for "few artists work quite cleanly, casting off all *débris*, and leaving us only what the heat of their imagination has wholly fused and transformed." But scattered up and down their work this beauty is revealed by means of the virtue of the quality they have found.



"MUSIC." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

A wall decoration on gold ground in the collection of A. Lucas, Esq.

While many of our British painters have been abandoning old traditions for sensationalism, exaggeration, and effect, Mr. Perugini has been working on old lines with that quietness of subject and reserve of manner which is peculiarly characteristic of his style, and after all style is the man "complex or simple in his individuality, it is through style alone there is revealed his plenary sense of what he really wishes to



"THE GREEN LIZARD." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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"THE RAMPARTS, WALMER CASTLE: THE COUNTESS GRANVILLE, WITH LADY VICTORIA AND LADY MARY LEVESON-GOWER."
By C. E. Perugini.

Reproduced, by permission, from the original in the collection of the Countess Granville.



"PEONIES." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

From the picture in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool. Reproduced from a photograph by Mansell & Co., Oxford Street, W.

say," the full expression of his inward vision of beauty. Mr. Perugini preaches no lay sermons in paint, he embodies no literary substance; but his accomplishment is distinguished and his opinions of beauty are worth investigation.

Living and working in this twentieth century, he belongs in sympathy to an earlier age, and we can write of him as Pater wrote of Winckelmann: "By his Hellenism, his life-long struggle to attain the Greek spirit, he is in complete accord with an earlier civilisation, his endeavours being to explain its tendencies, its types, and its perfections." For it was Winckelmann who "first pointed to the real sources of superiority in antiuqe



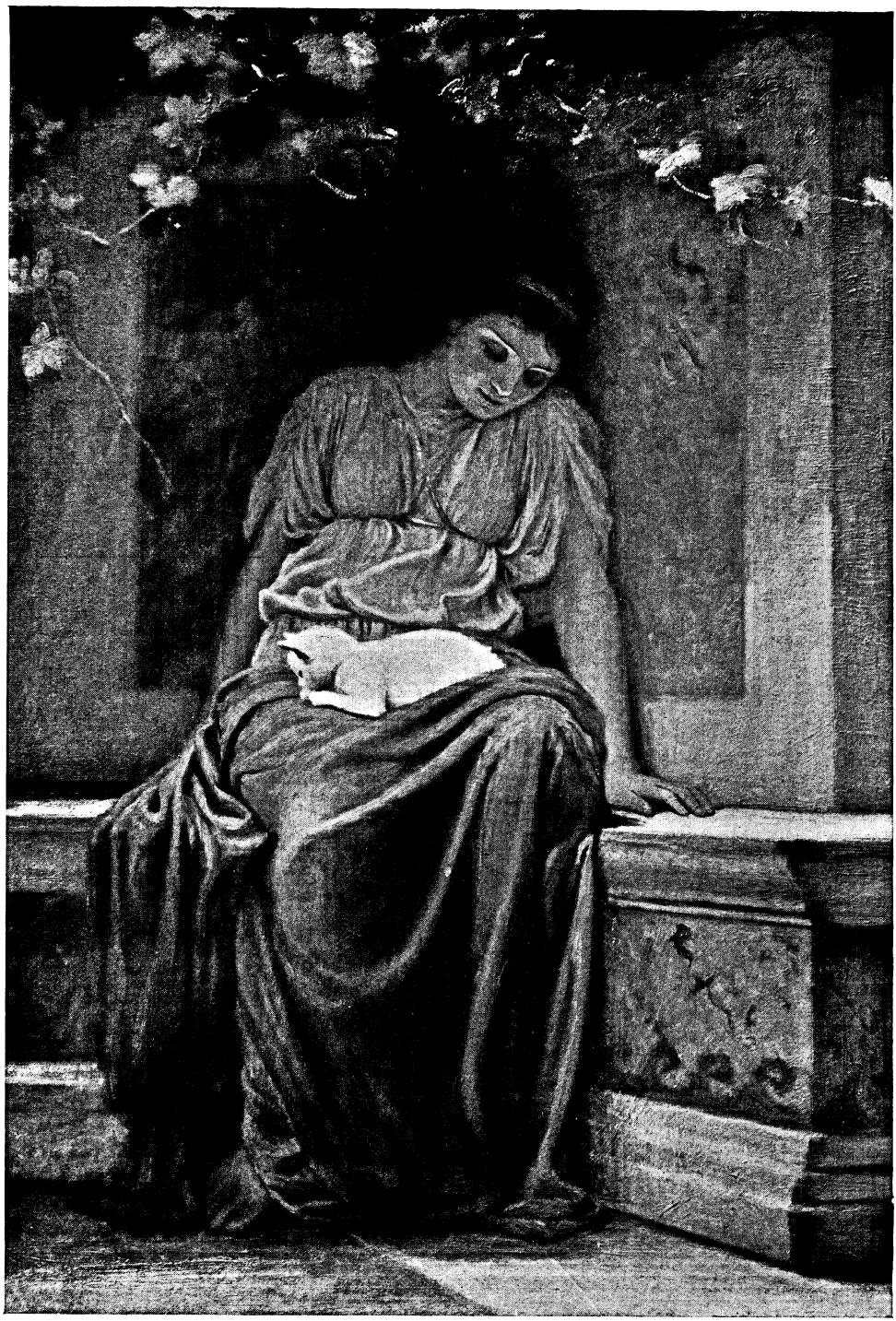
"REGINA." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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"GRAZIELLA." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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"THE SIESTA." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

Reproduced from a finished sketch for the picture in the collection of H.R.H. the Duchess of Albany.



"SWEET LAVENDER." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

Reproduced from a finished sketch for the picture in the collection of William Christie, Esq.

creations, by emphasising the distinction between natural and ideal beauty, the æsthetic value of contour as an ideal element, the beauty of expression as the manifestation of an elevated soul."

Full of passion for all that is immortal in the past, Mr. Perugini's work is filled with the flavour of the academic; almost he seems to consider painting as a development of sculpture, and certain of his pictures could have borne to be created from marble by the aid of a chisel and a hammer.

The calm, statuesque women who haunt his canvases, women freed from both harrowing and cloying emotions, front us with their dark eyes fixed not on the turmoil and tumult of the twentieth century, but on some serene beatitude far back on the classic slopes of Time. And it is in the classic style that the noblest work has been done.



"GIRL READING." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

Reproduced from a finished sketch for the picture in the collection of Sir William Eden, Bart.



"CROSSING THE TORRENT." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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Born in Naples, of which his people, long resident in England, were natives, as their euphonious, liquid-sounding name denotes, Charles Perugini was brought up in his adopted country till he was between eleven and twelve years of age. Then, having developed great precocity in the art in which he was later to distinguish himself, he was, on the advice of Horace Vernet, one of his father's intimate friends, sent to Italy and placed under the charge of Giuseppe Bonolis to be grounded in the general principles of art, a severe course of education which embraced as subjects anatomy, architecture, perspective, modelling, drawing, and ultimately painting.

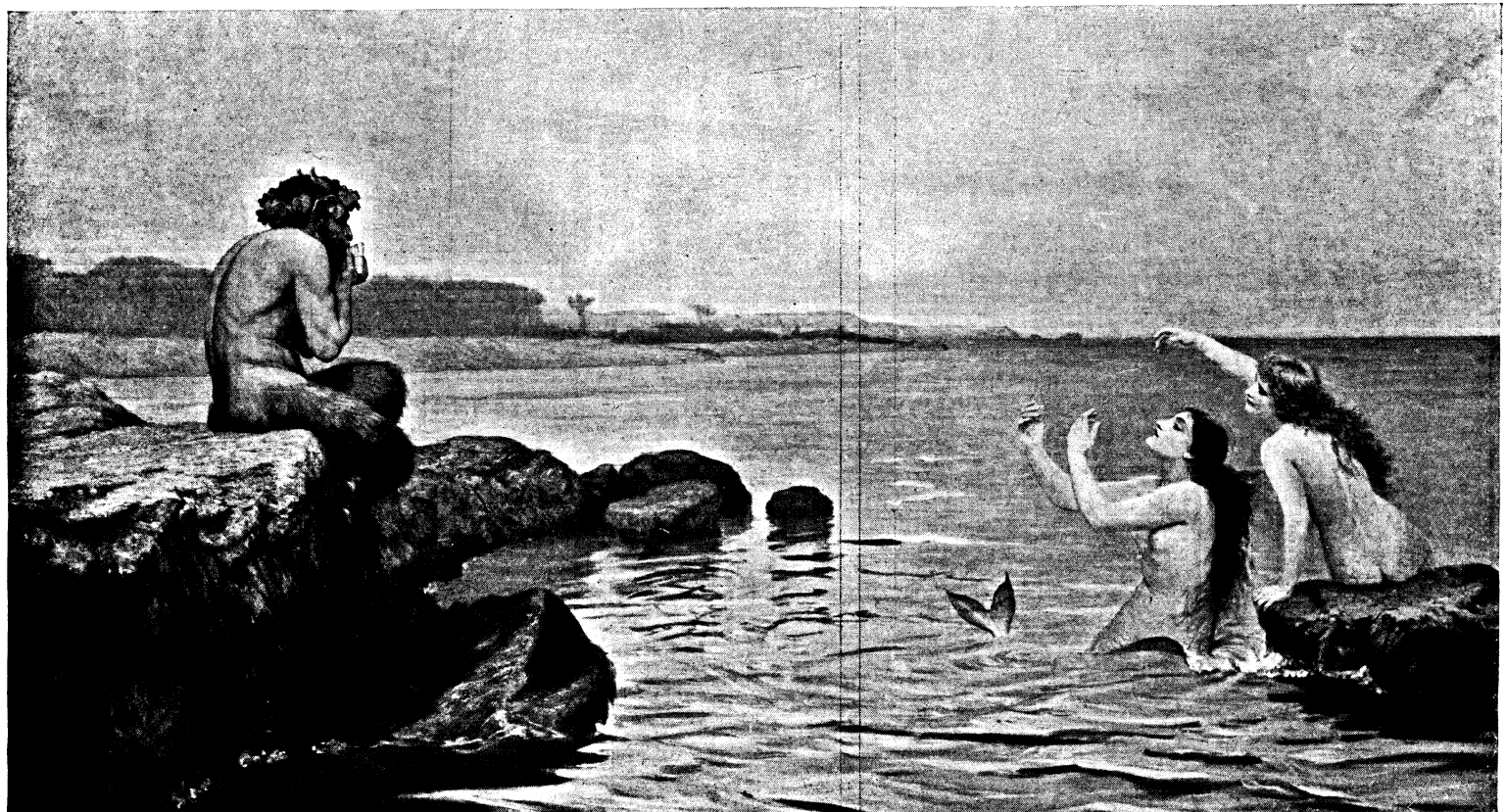


"CUP AND BALL." BY C. E. PERUGINI.
From the original in the collection of Sir William S. Gilbert.

The influence of Bonolis proved stimulating to the lad's natural bent, which was further encouraged by Giuseppe Mancinelli, the head of the Academy of Naples, under whose guidance the young Perugini next came. Then Ary Scheffer, almost at the end of his career at this time, became interested in the lad's ability, and although "to take pupils" was no habit of his, took upon himself the supervision of his labours.

By 1872 Mr. Perugini was working on his own account, independent, natural sight, fully developed, having followed quickly upon his period of novitiate. In this year he exhibited in the Academy a picture which earned for him considerable *kudos*, entitled, "Playing at Work." "A Cup of Tea" belongs to the seventies, so too do "The Rivals," "Finishing Touches," "Sweet Lavender," and "A Labour of Love."

With the 'eighties we find Mr. Perugini firmly established under the influence of that particular *genre* which we have come to consider as inimical to modern sensationalism, showing



"PAN AND THE SIRENS." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

Reproduced by permission of the Artist.

himself entirely subject to the inspiration of the earlier age.

To the Greeks dress was a beautiful art, and all the pictures which, with the 'eighties, Mr. Perugini commenced to paint, revealed that perception of line which the Greeks themselves in their draperies well understood.

"A Siesta," now in the possession of the Duchess of Albany, "Dolce far niente," "Idle Moments," "Cup and Ball," "Tempora mutantur," "A Summer Shower," "La Superba," "The World Forgetting," "Idleness," "Weary Waiting"—"these," as Mr. Spielmann wrote in an appreciative article in *The Magazine of Art*, "and half-a-hundred more, attest the skill with which Mr. Perugini plays ever seriously upon the spirit of his tuneful art, in which life's shadows are never deep, wherein the foul or sad or painful never enters . . . . Mr. Perugini is the painter *par excellence* of the *siesta*, the recorder, in delicate colour and harmonious line, of the delights of sweet idleness — when life is young and love is warm, ideally gracious, and—more or less Platonic; when the Sybarite demands the picturing of chastened bliss, and reformed Epicurus, repentant of his gluttony, turns from his viands to fruits and flowers and tea, forswears voluptuousness of every kind in favour of a staid and decorative sensualism, in comparison with his grosser tastes delectably austere. Mr. Perugini's luxuriousness, in fact, is less animal than intellectual; purity, chastity, and virtue undefiled breathe from his canvases, and, in the character of some contented and exemplary Hippolytus, he is constantly revealed singing the praises of some fortunate Lucretia or happy Virginia, and for ever celebrating, with respectful admiration and decorous affection, the veiled charm of modest vestals, the innocent grace and pretty indolence of lovable womanhood."



Photo by] [*Dixon & Son.*

MR. C. E. PERUGINI.

Mr. Perugini married Kate, the youngest daughter of Charles Dickens, herself an artist of great charm, whose "Songs Without Words," "An Impartial Audience," "Sympathy," and a vast number of well-executed portraits of children, have firmly established her as a painter in popular favour. The home of the two, in Victoria Road, Kensington, is a monument to their successful collaboration in a different form of art. It is a house of no pretension, just a detached villa, erected when Kensington was a London suburb. It was once in the possession of Barlow the engraver, whose workshop is now converted into a drawing-room, while his billiard-room has been made into a studio, rooms which, in their new form, surprise by their harmony and that integrity of taste which unites variety. It is only by the promptings of an artificial afterthought, the child of curiosity, that one looks round the rooms to note the separate pieces of furniture, the soft, lustrous-hued Persian rugs, the sombre tapestries, the subdued-in-colour brocades that go so congruously to form a whole of a high level of taste. The circumstance of both husband and wife's close friendship with Sir John Everett Millais is illustrated by that great artist's fine portrait of Mrs. Perugini which hangs in the studio.

In such surroundings and amongst many friends we leave the subject of our article, who has passed his life in a sustained and strenuous effort to capture beauty, and has not failed in his attempt.

THE COUNTESS.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "The Garden of Lies," "Tommy Carteret," "The Quest," etc.

THE brief visit of the Spinks' Countess to Edgecombe was beyond doubt the leading social event of that year. It may be that upon other occasions other countesses of the commoner or vulgar species have graced the little university town with their petty dignity. I do not know. But the Spinks' Countess was a being from another sphere altogether—a member of the "High Nobility," the sacred *Hoher Adel*, and that means that she was very close indeed to royalty. It was generally understood that Mrs. Spink and Gertrude—the President remaining at home upon university affairs—had met this exalted lady in the Engadine during the preceding summer and had pressed her to visit Edgecombe while on her projected American tour. I doubt even the Spinks believed that she would really come, and I know that they were all in a flutter when she pounced upon them as it were out of a blue sky, with only a day or two's notice.

There was a hasty round of the university grounds and buildings made in the morning, and there was to have been a reception in the afternoon, but the Countess begged off on the plea of fatigue (a plea which would vastly have amused any one of her friends). So Edgecombe had to wait until evening. A few of the "chiefest" elect were asked to dinner, but the main body of the university circle moved upon the President's house somewhat later on. There were more than one who rose from a couch of suffering to be there—I believe they would have risen from a deathbed had it unhappily been necessary; but one and all they came, grim with the determination to see what they should see.

What they saw was an exceedingly beautiful picture—as anyone who knew the upper ranks of Vienna or London Society could have foretold; but I am afraid, I am a little afraid, that there were reddened cheeks in Edgecombe that evening, and startled eyes meeting startled eyes and looking hastily away again. I am afraid there was some little whispering for a long time afterwards. The truth seems to be that the good ladies of the place—well, I dare say it is the same in all circles where brain thrives to the neglect of the body. The Countess, you must understand, was young, and very beautiful, and not poor, and she liked pretty clothes. To put the matter with frankness and brevity, the *robe collante* and the consequent "*suppression des dessous*" (I quote the Countess's maid, a woman of terse and epigrammatic speech) were unknown in Edgecombe. There's the plain truth of it. Yes, I am afraid there was something in the nature of a mild sensation. You see, not only did feminine Edgecombe drape its chaste limbs with an ample sufficiency of "*dessous*," but it covered up its shoulders pretty well also—a modest V, perhaps at dancing parties—and it did not possess a large quantity of black hair bound with a gold fillet, nor ropes and earrings of large pink pearls, nor—well, the Countess was another kind of lady altogether.

She certainly looked very royal indeed (even if, in Edgecombe's eyes, thoroughly shameless), much more royal than she had any right to look, though her house was beyond the slightest doubt "mediatised," and the house of her late husband, too. Also she was most royally gracious to one and all, and said a great many pleasant things about Edgecombe and its seat of learning.

Somewhat late in the evening the Countess was standing at one side of the big Colonial drawing-room with the President and the head of the Greek department, who were delivering themselves of what they believed to be German conversation—an unnecessary effort since the lady spoke excellent English—when the Countess quite suddenly gave a little smothered cry and caught the President's arm in a convulsive grasp so fierce that that amiable old gentleman contorted his features and said: "Ee ee!" or something to that effect. The Countess's face

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was turned towards the door of the drawing-room through which had just entered a tall and rather gaunt gentleman with deep-set, melancholy eyes and the air of one who does not very often smile. The gentleman's neatly brushed hair was just beginning to be grey over the ears, but the fierce little upturned moustache and the tiny *mouche* beneath the lower lip were as yet untouched. There is a certain native distinction of bearing and manner appertaining to some people, which is not at all haughtiness or exaggerated pride, and which cannot be described in any words that I know of. The tall, foreign-looking gentleman who had just entered Mrs. Spink's drawing-room possessed an uncommon share of this distinction. He was neither extraordinarily handsome nor in any way imposing, but it seemed quite natural that everybody should turn and look at him as he made his way towards his hostess.

The Countess watched this gentleman move across the room, and her face was as white as paper. She seemed to be breathing hard, and the head of the Greek department noticed it and wondered a little.

"What," said the Countess at last, and released her hold upon the President's arm—but she did not withdraw her gaze—"what is Prince Friedrich zu Ehrenstein doing here? What is he doing here?" The head of the Greek department noted that her hands were trembling beside her. The President blinked out across the room with his amiable and somewhat fatuous smile.

"Oh, that gentleman?" said he. "Did you think—does he resemble someone you know, ma'am? That is Herr Kellar, our Assistant Professor of German Literature. He is engaged to be married to my younger daughter, Mabel." But the Countess made an impatient movement beside him.

"Nonsense!" she cried in a sharp tone. "That is Prince Friedrich zu Ehrenstein." And after a moment she said: "Bring him to me, please!"

The President of the university turned faintly pink, and his mouth opened and closed once or twice like a fish's mouth without producing any sound. He was not at all accustomed to contradiction by young ladies, to being commanded in that imperative tone to do things. He coughed, took an agitated step away, and returned again. But the head of the Greek department—a being, despite his profession, well-nigh human, and, it may be, possessed of some human curiosity, intervened to spare his chief. He said—

"I will fetch Herr Kellar." And went away to do it.

During his absence the Countess did not stir, save for a somewhat tumultuous breathing, but she was vaguely conscious of senile babble beside her, and made out that the President said, among other things: "Herr Kellar has been away for a fortnight. He must have returned only this evening. I dare say Mabel left word for him to come here at once." Then the two men were seen to be approaching.

Midway of the room the Assistant Professor of German Literature seemed to have become aware of the exalted guest of the evening, for several people saw him all at once stop dead, looking before him, and they saw his hand drop from the arm of the head of the Greek department. But when he had taken breath, he advanced once more, his step unagitated, his melancholy face impassive. The President went a pace to meet him, and seemed to swell a very little, as always in moments of high ceremony. He said—

"Herr Kellar, the Countess von Arndt desires me to do you the honour of presenting you to her." The Assistant Professor bowed deeply in the German fashion, but the lady stood in her place, white and still, with fixed eyes; only when he had risen from his low bow and stood once more erect before her, she said in an odd and strained voice—

"It is the custom, Herr Kellar, at parties where I am entertained, for gentlemen to do me the honour of wearing their decorations," and once more the Assistant Professor of German Literature made his deep and ceremonious bow, but did not speak. Abruptly, after a tense silence, she took his arm, saying in German—

"Get me out of here!—Somewhere where we can speak alone. You know the house." Over her shoulder she directed a belated apology to her host.

"I have asked Herr Kellar—with your permission—to take me out of the crowded room for a few moments. My head aches—an old friend—unexpected meeting——" The President received the last words from a distance, and, as it were, in fragments, for the lady did not await an answer.

They went across the large drawing-room, where all who were present turned to look at them, across a smaller room beyond, and so to a covered porch where palms and potted plants had been set about for the occasion, making the place a sort of garden. And



"The Assistant Professor of German Literature bent over the Countess's hands and kissed them."

there in the soft and fragrant half-gloom they faced each other at last, eye to eye, with no one to see them.

The Assistant Professor of German Literature bent over the Countess's hands and kissed them. He called her by name—

"Brenda! Brenda!" And there came from that lady's lips a sound not unlike a sob. When her hands were free, she put them out upon the man's shoulders and held him so. She cried—

"Fritz! Why this absurd masquerade? Oh, my dear, what are you doing in this place?—'Herr Kellar'!" she scoffed, laughing a little. "'Assistant Professor of German Literature'! What does it mean, Fritz? An Ehrenstein teaching schoolboys! We thought you were dead."

"My father knew," said he. "He knows where I am. He has always known. You yourself knew why I came away, four years ago."

"Yes," she nodded. "I knew about the quarrel. But surely now—now that Adolf and Heinrich are dead—— Why, you are—when your father dies, and he is an old man, Fritz—you will be the head of the house. Surely you cannot remain here now that you are next in succession?"

"I shall never go back," said he. "That is out of the question."

The Countess gave a little laugh of astonishment and incredulity, but, upon that, suddenly cried out—

"This girl! This young daughter of the Madame Spink!" And Prince Friedrich bowed his head, saying—

"We have been betrothed for a long time. Her health has not been good, and so we have waited. We are to be married, I hope, in the coming autumn." The Countess again gave her brief laugh of astonishment and incredulity—as at the foolish speech of a rash child.

"But, my good Fritz, you cannot seriously mean that! It is impossible!"

"On the contrary," said he, "it is true." The woman stared at him hard.

"Are you quite mad?" she demanded. "Has this country robbed you of your wits? You know perfectly well that a member of the *Hoher Adel* cannot marry a commoner or even a person in the lower nobility. You know that perfectly well." Her voice turned a little angry.

"It is very unlike you," she said, "to let this poor child think that you mean to marry her, when you cannot do it."

"I have already said" corrected Prince Friedrich gently, "that I intend to marry her, if she will be so good as to have me."

"But you cannot!" cried the woman angrily. "You cannot marry her, save morganatically—and these Americans do not recognise a morganatic marriage. What are you saying? You would have to have the consent of every adult male of the house. Do you think they would give it? Hardly! You might as well talk of the Kaiser marrying little Miss Spink. Fritz, I no longer know you. You are very strange to me."

"Has it never occurred to you, dear Brenda," said he, "that there is a way? I intend, of course, formally to relinquish my claim to the title and the estates and the fortune—the name itself—all. I cast them from me. They have never brought me anything but loss and bitterness and hatred and estrangement. I give them up. Here I have already a certain position, humble if you like, but useful nevertheless. I am to be married. My life is here. I put the other behind me. Even a king may do that, Brenda."

The Countess gave a little gasp of horror and bewilderment—perhaps of more than that. She sank down in one of the cane seats which were near, and, for an instant, covered her face. Once or twice she spoke as if to herself, half aloud, broken words, bits of sentences. She seemed to say: "It is incredible—impossible—it cannot be!" She seemed to say that again and again, and she seemed to be shivering a little, as if the May evening had suddenly turned cold. Away somewhere in the darkness a group of university lads were singing together an old song. They sang like German students, in parts, with sweet, trained voices, and they must have been walking as they sang, for the music grew fainter and fainter, until at last it died away altogether and was still.

Then the Countess raised her head and looked upon the man who stood before her. She said—

"I must believe that you are serious, Fritz. It is incredible—I think that it is rather terrible—but I must believe you.

"So," said she gravely, "so for a slip of a girl you give up name and family, your standing before the world, vast estates. As it were, you perish from the world that knew you. You must love her very much." She spoke in a tone of half question and seemed to wait for an answer. Prince Friedrich made a little movement in the gloom.

"I have told you that we are to be married," said he. But the woman went on slowly as if she had not heard. She repeated: "You must love her very much." An odd little wave of bitterness seemed to sweep over her. It rang in her voice.

"I had thought I knew how much you could love. I had thought love like yours—would live—eternally. I thought I knew you. It seems not. After four years—only four years—four little years! Ah, my friend, you men forget quickly! You love and forget and love again. I envy you."

Prince Friedrich covered his face with his hands, and he cried her name: "Brenda! Brenda! For Heaven's sake!" He turned blindly away from her into the deeper gloom of the palms and flowers, but that cry had brought the woman to her feet like a call, for it was wrung out of torture and intolerable agony, and she knew it. She stood in her place, white and still, held there, as it were by incredible effort, incredible mastery of herself. Her arms were rigid beside her, lest, of their own accord, they should stretch out to him; her face upturned in the shaft of light from the doorway. But after an interminable moment of this she sat down again, stumbling a little as if her knees had given way under her, and she found that she was breathing very hard. She said—

"Forgive me, Fritz! I had no—I had no right to say that. It was contemptible of me. Forgive me, if you can. I have been perhaps a little—overcome at seeing you after so long, after believing you dead, for your father let that rumour exist, you know, without denying it. Come back and sit down. We must talk sensibly and soberly for a moment before we return to these good Spinks and their good friends."

Prince Friedrich turned back towards her without speaking—he seemed to move rather listlessly like a man tired—and she looked up at him with a thoughtful frown. Afterwards she said—

"Tell me something. I have the right of—an old friend in asking. When did you become engaged to the little Miss Spink?"

"It was somewhat more than a year ago," said he, and the Countess nodded, as if the words explained to her something obscure.

"That was before the death of your two brothers," she said, and the man looked down at his hands and answered "Yes."

"Tell me something," she said. "Answer me a simple question, simply in a word, for I don't intend to discuss the matter. It is—too late now; and, besides, it would not be fair—considering everything. You know, of course, that my husband is dead. He died two years ago, within a year of our marriage. But when did you first hear of it? Answer me in a word!"

The man spoke so low that she heard him with difficulty. Once more his face was bowed over his two hands. He said—

"Six months ago—by accident. There was no one to tell me. My father——"

The Countess nodded her head, saying: "Thank you! I am glad to know that." She seemed to reflect upon it—for a little space, then abruptly rose to her feet, saying—

"We must go back to the drawing-room." She asked: "Will you come to see me to-morrow, Fritz? I had intended leaving here in the morning, but of course I cannot go without a long talk with you. Will you come?"

Again he answered her "Yes," and she said "Thank you." She turned towards the lighted door, but halted half way to its threshold.

"There is just one more thing. Do you know who is next in the Ehrenstein succession after you?" The Prince turned his face from her.

"Yes, I know. Count Boris. Oh, I know."

"A scoundrel, Fritz," she said. "His name is a byword all over Austria—all over Europe, for that matter. A blackleg and a scoundrel will be head of the Ehrensteins. It's a pity, isn't it?

"Come!" said she. "We must return to the drawing-room."

* * * * *

Late that night when the great reception was over, and the household gone to their respective rooms, the Countess got quickly out of her satin gown into a comfortable, if somewhat precious, *negligée* of lace and rose silk, sent away her maid, and sat down to deliberate. She lit a cigarette to aid her in this unusual process, and, when that was finished, lit another. There was a knock at the door, and, without rising, she said "Come in!" The younger Spink girl, Mabel, incredibly slight and childlike, a waif of a maid in her Japanese dressing-gown, came into the room. The Countess breathed a soft and satisfied "Ah!"

"I had to see you!" the girl said. "You must forgive me for coming at this hour, but I had to see you!" She was patiently agitated, her nerves aquiver—her eyes looked enormous in that thin and pallid little face.

"I am very glad you came," said the elder

woman. "I am not sleepy, and this will give me a chance to become better acquainted with you. You see, I know your mother and sister so much better than I do you." She pushed forward a comfortable chair.

"I suppose I mayn't offer you a cigarette?" The girl coloured and looked away, saying—

"No, thank you. We do not think—that is, I should not care for it. Thank you very much." She sat down, drawing the thin crêpe of her gown chastely about her, and the Countess laughed a little to herself. The child interested her as a totally unfamiliar type, for "Puritan" was but a word to the lady from Vienna. She saw the outshining of that stubborn, indomitably righteous flame in its frail envelope of flesh, but she did not know that generations of ascetics and martyrs had kindled it there. In short, the Countess was a stranger to New England.

"I will be as brief as I can," the girl said. Her enormous eyes raised themselves to the elder woman's face and stayed there, afraid but unshrinking. Her hands clasped and unclasped in her lap.

"I—heard what was said between you and Herr—and Friedrich," she began, and paused to control her voice. "At first it was accidental, then—I listened, I deliberately listened. I did a dishonourable thing. I could not help it. I had to know." The Countess laughed easily.

"Oh, pray don't apologise!" she said. "We're not very honourable about little things, we women. I should have done the same in your place. Well?"

"What is it?" cried Mabel Spink. "I must know! I've got to know! What is this dreadful mystery about—him?"

The other woman sat forward in her chair with a sudden exclamation.

"Do you mean to say," said she—"do you mean to tell me that you didn't know your Herr Kellar was Prince Friedrich zu Ehrenstein?" And the girl shook a piteous head.

"I knew nothing of that. Nothing. I knew only that he had changed his name, for family reasons, when he came to America. Once he said that before we—were married, he must tell me all about his previous life, but that for the present it was not necessary. Now I've got to know all there is to know. Please, you must tell me everything."

"This is incredible!" the Countess said under her breath. She stared a long time at the young girl before her. Then at last she said—

"Your Herr Kellar is the only remaining son of Prince zu Ehrenstein, for his two brothers were killed in a motor accident about ten months ago. That means that, at his father's death, he will be the head of a great house of the *High Nobility*. You know what the *High Nobility* is — the *Hoher Adel*—the mediatised houses?"

"Vaguely," the girl said. "Here in America we do not recognise artificial distinctions. We think them wrong."

"I dare say," nodded the elder woman a little dryly. "Yes, I dare say you do; but in Europe it is different, and in Austria it is extremely different. The mediatised houses are families which were, before Napoleon's conquests, sovereign—rulers of small States. By the Congress of Vienna they were 'mediatised,' as we say, but they still retain a great many of the special honours and privileges and rights of royalty—as well as some of the drawbacks, too. Their members cannot marry outside their rank. Prince Friedrich could not marry even the daughter of an English duke without the consent of every male adult of his house, and that consent would not be given. If he marries outside the *Hoher Adel*, he must give up all claim to his family rank and privileges and estates.

"Prince Friedrich left Austria four years ago, after a violent quarrel with his father, who had tried to force him into a distasteful marriage. Probably you are not familiar with the absolute authority the heads of these great houses wield over their families. He went abroad, and, within a year, a rumour was spread about that he had died. His father allowed the story to be believed—but you must remember that at that time Prince Friedrich was not regarded as very high in the succession. One of his brothers was already married, though childless, and the other betrothed.

"And then," said the Countess, looking down upon the cigarette between her fingers, "then — I married Count von Arndt. I was compelled to by my father. Count von Arndt was a drunkard and a degenerate—something unspeakable—but he was near the head of his house. He lived less than a year."

The young girl bent forward a little, watching the elder woman's face.

"Why do you tell me that?" she demanded. "What has that to do with Prince —with Herr Kellar?" And the other looked up again, saying—

"It had a good deal to do with him. He loved me once, but we were not allowed to

marry, because our fathers had other plans for us."

The girl drew back with tightening lips, and a little flush came up over her face and remained a brief moment and paled again. Presently she said—

"All this talk of great families and royal ancestry and special privileges is very foreign to me and far-away and—if I may say it, unsympathetic. I suppose I can understand how people who live among such—practices, such conditions may value them, but—to me they do not seem things worthy of sacrificing one's life to. It seems to me one's life is too solemn and sacred a thing to be devoted to shams and empty ceremonies. Herr Kellar—saw fit, before ever he met me at all, to put that life behind him, to come here where all men are equal, where ideals are high, and to make a career for himself, unaided. I cannot feel that the change has been for the worse. I think it has been infinitely for the better." Two round red spots had come into the girl's pale cheeks, and her thin little lips were pressed tightly together. Her eyes looked enormous, and they shone bright with their indomitable flame. She might have been a Pilgrim Father in that hour, arguing for the faith against oppression. She was so terribly in earnest about her convictions!

"I do not wish to be disrespectful," she said, trembling a little, "but you seem to be holding me responsible for Herr Kellar's leaving his foreign home. I am not; but if I were, I should not be ashamed, for I think that his life here is a much better and nobler life than sitting idle among pomps and ceremonies."

The Countess von Arndt gasped.

"*Sitting idle among ——!*" She gave a brief laugh with an edge of anger in it.

"Really, my dear child, you seem to have an extraordinary naïve idea of the labours and responsibilities of high rank. 'Sitting idle among——' *Lieber Gott!*" She broke off to stare at the girl before her with something like dismay. She began to realise a very little the astonishing invulnerability of the Puritan nature where its convictions are concerned.

"It seems to me incredible," she said, "that anyone in the civilised world should know so little about how certain large areas of the world are managed. I would suggest, my dear young lady, that you inform yourself more thoroughly before discussing such matters. Also, I am afraid you're being just a wee bit rude, but I don't mind that."

The girl flushed swiftly crimson, for she had not meant at all to be rude, had not realised how her words must sound. She began to stammer an apology, but the elder woman checked her good-naturedly, repeating—

"Oh, I don't mind at all. Only—in one thing I am afraid you are wrong (of course, you're wrong about heaps of others, too, but that does not matter). I am afraid you are wrong if you think that Friedrich remains here, now that his brothers are dead, because he thinks the life a better one. I am afraid he remains because of you." What she had said before to the man himself, she said again to this girl.

"He must love you very much, mustn't he? How he must love you!"

"He loves me," said the young girl, "as I have always wished to be loved, not in the ways that I—distrust and disapprove. We have the same likes and dislikes, the same ideals"—("Oh, have you, though?" said Brenda von Arndt to herself)—"the same intellectual tastes. It is a good and worthy love. I should not care to be loved as—some women are—in the way—— It would seem to me a degradation."

"*Du lieber Gott!*" said the Countess to herself. But aloud she said—

"I understand, I think. You do not profess a great passion for each other. No, of course!" For some obscure reason she seemed a little glad, and drew one long breath and clasped her hands together in her lap very hard. But Mabel Spink was embarrassed at that offensive word "passion," and turned away with flushed cheeks.

"Will you tell me," asked the Countess presently, "how it came about—your engagement? Would you care to tell me?"

At first it seemed as if the girl would not speak, for she remained silent a little time, her head bent, her face turned away. But at last she said—

"It is no more than fair. I have asked you intimate questions; you have a right to ask them of me." She looked up with what seemed to Brenda von Arndt an oddly defiant air—as of one on her defence. She said—

"A long time ago I was very ill—they feared I was going to die. My father was away—in England. Nothing the doctors here could do seemed to help me. Then Friedrich—Herr Kellar spoke to my mother about a certain German physician who happened to be in New York, and they sent for him. I got better under his treatment, and, after that, my mother relied upon

Friedrich's advice and judgment a great deal; and he was often, very often, at the house. When I was convalescent and could be moved to an invalid-chair, he used to sit with me and read to me or talk. I—found out how good he was and noble and tender, and I had always liked him, and once in a —in a weak moment, when I was not quite myself, I told my mother how I had come to feel—towards him. I think they talked of it together, and soon he—proposed. That is all. It was more than a year ago."

She became aware that the elder woman was regarding her strangely, under bent brows, and she looked away. Her hands were restless in her lap.

"Ah!" said the Countess in a low voice. "Your mother told him you had fallen in love with him, and so he asked you to marry him? So!"

Mabel Spink gave a sharp cry and sprang to her feet. She retreated a little way before the other woman and stood in the middle of the room, her hands clasped hard against her thin breast.

"I won't listen to you!" she cried, and began to tremble exceedingly. "I won't listen! You are saying and hinting terrible things. You are trying to make me believe that I stand in Friedrich's way, that I am a millstone about his neck—I! You are saying that if it weren't for me, he would go back to his courts and his estates and his foolish titles. You are trying to make me believe that he was tricked into asking me to marry him. Abominable things!

"But I won't listen to you! You are trying to take him away from me and I know why. *You want him for yourself!*"

The girl stood there panting in the middle of the chamber, her hands strained over her frail breast, her eyes growing feverishly, and she began to be shaken by great sobs. The Countess rose to face her and, after a moment of silence, said—

"Well, and if I do?

"What if I do?" she repeated. "I do not deny it. I loved him before you ever saw him. I have loved him ever since. I shall always love him, whether I ever see him again or not, whether he lives or dies, whether he loves me in turn or curses me and drives me from him. Oh, yes! I love him, and I want him for himself. I could have had him once. If I had said one word, he would have defied his father and mine and carried me off. He would have turned his back on them all. But that would have meant ruin to him, and I would not let him do it. You see, once I stood towards him just as you stand now, but I gave him up rather than ruin him. It seems you are less —you feel differently.

"Come!" said she. "Let us look upon it fairly. We both love him; we both, I take it, think first of his good. What can each of us offer to Friedrich zu Ehrenstein? You offer him love—you call it love—and a life of humble routine in an obscure town, teaching foolish lads things they will soon forget. I," said the Countess, with a great breath, with flushing cheeks and bright eyes, "I offer him—love—love—love such as you, my child, know nothing, dream nothing, about. And I offer him his proper place among the great of this world, his proper dignity, the honours to which he was born and for which his ancestors fought and died.

"Which of us, now, shall have him, you or I?" She came a step forward, looking very keenly into the face of the girl before her, weighing the girl, judging her.

"I will not give him up!" cried Mabel Spink between tight lips. "He is mine. He has left his other life. He feels towards it as I do. He has chosen this newer, better one. And he has chosen me. You are not thinking of his good, you are thinking of yours. You want him for yourself. You shan't have him!" She was still trembling violently, but that unquenchable, that indomitable fire burnt in her large eyes, a fierce and fearless flame.

The other woman wrung her hands before her.

"Oh, how shall I make you see?" she cried. "How shall I give eyes to the blind? How shall I make you understand?" She began with swift steps to walk up and down the room, her hands twisting together at her heart, her head up-flung, her eyes staring.

"I must save him!" she cried desperately. "I must save him somehow! What to do?" Abruptly she stood still with a little sharp exclamation, and so remained for what may have been a minute or two or even three: then turned once more to the girl. She said—

"You think I am considering only myself. Listen, then! If you will give him up, set him free, insist upon setting him free whatever he may urge against it, I will promise you, upon oath, never to marry him, never to let him speak of love to me, never to see him when I can possibly avoid it. I will do that if you will give me your promise here, to-night. Now, perhaps, you know what love is."



"'You are trying to take him away from me and I know why!'"

The girl stared at her and saw that all the rich colour had gone out of the Countess's face, and that dark rings had come quite suddenly under her eyes. Yet still that Puritan fire burnt white and high — unconquerable. Still the girl stood tense though shaken by sobbing, inflexible as the granite of her shores, invulnerable in her consciousness of rectitude.

"I do not believe it is for his good," she said. "Your words make me seem wrong, but I know that I am right. I will not give him up."

"Then Heaven help us all!" said Brenda von Arndt. "I can say no more." She turned away, moving with slow and lagging steps. She went to one of the windows and leant her arms against it and hid her face in them. When after a long time she turned back again, Mabel Spink had gone.

* * * * *

Over his breakfast the next morning the Assistant Professor of German Literature received a telephone message from his *fiancée* asking him to come to her at once. He finished hastily and went, for it was Saturday and he had no classes that morning.

He found her in the smaller drawing-room in a sort of dim twilight, for the venetians were closed to keep the morning sun out. Nevertheless, he could see that she was very white and hollow-eyed—as, for that matter, was he himself. It may well have been that three people had passed a wretched white night since their last meeting. The Assistant Professor kissed Miss Spink's hand in his ceremonious fashion, and exclaimed over her pallor, but she checked him, She was in no mood for amenities. She said—

"I have summoned you here, Friedrich, to set you free.—No! Please let me talk. Please don't interrupt!" Still he overbore her.

"What is this nonsense?" He gave a cry—"This is Brenda's doing! Child, child, what has she been saying to you?"

"Only the truth, I think," said the girl. "And, at that, only what I myself asked her. She told me about you and who you really are, because I had heard something and felt that I had a right to know. However, it was not so much what she told me, I think, but what she left unsaid, that has decided me."

The girl stood off a little from her *fiancé*, as if his close presence confused and troubled her.

"You have become a stranger to me," said she. "In a few hours you have become a stranger—one from another world where all the standards and modes of thought, all the ideals are different. I do not know you any more. I thought you had become one of us, an American. But you have not. You could never become one, and I realise that at last. We are what our fathers have made us—what our ancestors have bred in us. I —could never again feel that we were—close together in sympathy."

He cried out to her in protest—

"Child! Child! Listen to me! Let me speak!" But she held him away with outstretched hands, saying—

"No; it is useless! I must say what I have to say—it is little—and then you must go." She said—

"I am not impressed by your title or your foreign rank or your foreign honours. I do not value such things, as you know. They seem to me false and wrong. But I have begun to see that to those who live among them, depend upon them, they are real things which cannot be ignored. I have begun to see that your rank imposes duties upon you, grave responsibilities which it would be wrong to shirk. It is your solemn duties I am thinking of, not your empty honours.

"So I give you up. I send you away, and you must go. Your place is not here, as I thought. It is there where your home is and where your responsibilities are. Please do not plead with me, or try to change my decision. It cannot be changed. It is final."

Even then he would have argued with her, refused to go, insisted upon seeing her father and mother; but she was inflexible, and, from long association, he knew the folly of trying to soften her.

"I suppose," she said, "I suppose I shall suffer somewhat, later on, when the first shock of this is over; but I shall know that I did right, and that will cheer me. There can be no intolerable suffering when one is sure of having done right."

And at the last she said to him—

"I presume you will in time marry the Countess von Arndt. I—shall hope that you will be very happy. She loves you—unselfishly. I happen to know that. I have had proof of it. I hope you will be happy."

Then she let him kiss her hand once more and went out of the room and left him. At the door she looked back, and Prince Friedrich was sitting upon the edge of a chair, bent over, in that strange morning twilight, his face buried in his hands.

It was some moments before he sighed and rose and at last took up his hat and stick and left the house. One standing at an upper window heard the door close below and saw the man go slowly out to the street, walking with bent head and bowed shoulders. She knew what it meant, for she had had speech that morning with Mabel Spink and had learned the girl's decision. Her eyes clung to Prince Friedrich zu Ehrenstein, and her hands, outstretched upon the glass of the window, trembled a little as she watched. She saw him hesitate and look once down the street southward, towards the university. Then she saw him straighten his bowed shoulders and take a deep breath. He turned his back to the south and struck out northward towards the town's outskirts and the open country.

In a literal sense he was walking away from her, but it seemed to the woman fancifully that every footfall upon the flagged pavement sounded louder and louder in her ears, and the figure and the face of the man she loved seemed to her to grow greater and greater as he approached, until her eyes were blinded, and the breath was held in her body, and her heart ceased beating altogether as his arms closed round her, and she hid her face upon his breast.

MUSIC OF THE FALLING NIGHT.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE OF AFFONSO LOPES-VIEIRA.

THE night is falling! Vanquished, bowed with pain,
Behind the world the red sun steals away;
Ev'n as the peasant doth his home regain
At close of day.

Faintly the winds the lingering shadows weave,
Gently the slow shades fall,
And with the calm, sweet, silent stir of eve
In peace envelop all.

The lips of the falling night
Ope to the ear of the soul,
From a thousand living things
Mute in the noonday bright
The waves of silence roll;
To passionate infinite utterings
The dreamy dusk empowers,
And to speech, to song, awake the strings
Of the harp of the twilight hours.

The tumult of the day,
Into the silence creeping,
Vanishes, dies away,
An outcast, weeping.

Breezes murmur of odours sweet,
Falling petals the warm earth greet;
A sound of breathing stirs the grass,
And on the air a sense of wings that pass,
Mute vigil keeping.

Slowly, one by one,
The tumbling dewdrops fall;
The long, long curling smoke-wreaths blue
Above the homesteads sigh adieu,
Adieu—for the day is done!
The sluggish pond grows musical
With song of toads resounding shrill,
Rising, falling, ebbing, swelling,
From its waters dank and still.
While, amidst their slumber telling
All the rapture of their dreams
Cry aloud the little streams.

* * * * *

'Tis night! The sun lies buried 'neath the brink
Of the horizon's dark abysmal cave;
Ev'n as the peasant at the last shall sink
Into the grave!

GRACE ERNESTINE MANNING.

THE HUNGARIAN GENTLEMAN FARMER.

BY BARONESS ORCZY.

SO much has been said and written lately concerning the peasant proprietor in the more Eastern countries of Europe, that the fact has been a little overlooked that this same peasant proprietor is more a creature of the future than of the immediate present.



"The lord himself will drive about from one corner of his estate to another."

In some of the agricultural districts of Central Hungary, the richer class of peasantry is certainly buying up in the shape of small holdings, and with the help of the local Agricultural Banks, such large estates as sometimes come into the open market; but this latter event is still very rare, and in Eastern and Upper Hungary, for instance, the peasant proprietor does not exist as yet.

All the land is in the hands of the nobility and what, for want of a better term, we might call the county gentry—ancient families, with long lines of ancestry behind them, with no more thought of alienating the land, which has been handed down from father to son for hundreds of years, than of selling one of their own children.

Enthroned in his *château*, which is mostly of mediæval origin, the Hungarian landowner keeps up—all unconsciously, perhaps—the old

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feudal ideas which modern civilisation has done very little to modify.

He is the supreme lord on his own estate, a little king within the boundaries of his realm. He is the only employer of labour within measurable distance, and the entire population on his land is dependent on him for subsistence, and—truth to tell—he does employ the entire able-bodied population on his estate, to work for him in one capacity or another.

A curious mixture of primitive simplicity and lavish extravagance is his chief characteristic. He is in the strictest sense of the word a farmer. An overseer—of the peasant class himself, but with a certain education or knowledge which has placed him somewhat above his fellows—remains as a sort of intermediary between the lord and his labourers.

But at all seasons of the year, at all hours of daylight, the lord himself will drive about from one corner of his estate to another and keep an eye upon the work of the farm.

Primarily the land is expected to yield a sufficiency for the upkeep of the family home, for my lord and my lady, their sons and daughters, married and unmarried, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, all find room in the spacious abode, and live on the products of the land.

They eat their own beef and mutton, they kill and eat their own pigs and poultry, of course; my lady and her daughters wear underlinen woven by the peasant women from the flax which grows on my lord's estate. Exquisite white linen it is, too, daintily embroidered by rough, toil-worn hands; but the wool with which that embroidery was fashioned came from the back of my lord's sheep, and was dyed in the village with a few primitive pigments found on my lord's own ground.



"My lady and her daughters."

I have a typical Hungarian home in my mind at the present moment, situated in the lowlands of Hungary, a mediæval *château* forming part of an estate of about ten thousand acres. The house is most comfortably and completely furnished; it is what in English we should describe as "well-found" in every way, and all the furnishing inside the house, with the exception of the silver, the glass, and the best china, was made or manufactured on the estate.

The furniture, chiefly of acacia wood, which grows in enormous profusion in this part of Hungary, was made and carved by those of the villagers in divers generations who had talents for carpentry. The carpets of roughly dyed wool were woven by the women—wives of coachmen, of gardeners, or other labourers—and were a miracle of softness, warmth, and cleverly blended, if

somewhat crude, colouring. The huge earthenware stoves, so typical and picturesque in Eastern Europe, were made up of beautiful majolica tiles baked and fired in the fields outside the village. The table linen was hand-woven, of fine white linen thread, the sheets and coarser cloths of home-grown hemp. The fireirons and kitchen utensils had been forged by the local smith.

And in the household Madame la Comtesse and Mesdemoiselles her daughters go about in home-made tweeds, which for warmth and comfort leave nothing to be desired, and wear soft shoes of half-tanned leather made in the village, which for durability and ease put all hygienic footwear to shame.

Of ready money there is but little in this otherwise gorgeous country home. With the exception of a part of the labourers' wages and certain little luxuries, such as coffee and sugar, which come down from the nearest town, almost everything can be paid for in kind—even the wages.

I have before me as I write the wages list belonging to a large estate in Hungary. It is quite typical. The doctor heads it: his duties are to look after births in the village and to mend a broken leg when necessary. He receives four hundred kronen a year —about sixteen pounds in English money —and has the use of a cottage, but he also has eight measures of wheat as part salary, so many measures of oats, and loads of maize and straw, so much hay and wurzel for his cow. And so on in a descending scale, down to the unskilled labourers, the women who help at the threshing, the boys who mind the pigs, at a living wage of about forty or fifty kronen a year—about two pounds—and so many sacks of potatoes and maize.

It is the old, mediæval system of barter. Coin of the realm invariably wanders into the pockets of the Jews. They are the only real traders, and they keep or own most of the inns and drinking-places. There, ready money must be paid, and the labourer who is inclined to spend his wages in drink can easily do so.



"When the Jew trader comes round after wood or to buy pigs."

But the landowner has nothing to do with that. By law he is obliged to pay part of his *employés'* salaries in money. Before 1848 there were any number of Hungarian landed proprietors owning ten or twenty thousand acres and a fine *château*, whose yearly income in money would be below forty pounds a year.

The emancipation of the peasantry from serfdom has altered this somewhat. The Government compulsorily bought up such

parts of large landed estates as constituted a village, and gave the cottages to the peasantry. So the gentleman farmer now no longer needs to house and feed his *employés*: he gives them so much with which to feed themselves.

The only difference it has made to him is that now when the Jew trader comes round after wood or to buy pigs, my lord has to sell for money.

He is the most contented individual in the world, in spite of the fact, or because of the fact that he knows absolutely nothing of what is going on around him. He does just read his newspaper which arrives daily from Budapest, and has vague ideas that all Austrians are thieves and scoundrels, and that therefore a union with Austria is necessarily fatal to Hungary; but, as a matter of fact, the political situation of his country does not interest him in the least; it does not affect the richness of his wheat or the weight of his maize-heads.

A keen sports man, he is unhampered by any game laws. In Hungary no one is allowed to carry a gun unless he owns so much land, and the owner of land—and therefore of game—naturally makes his own laws for its preservation.

His chief characteristic is hospitality, almost barbaric in its lavishness—his guests, his friends, his relations, all are welcome, as long as there is room in the house. What matter to him if ox, sheep or calf has to be specially slaughtered to feed the gay multitude who come to visit him? He has plenty and to spare.



"His chief characteristic is hospitality."

Of town and town life he knows nothing. Budapest is noisy, and the automobiles are smelly. He prefers driving his magnificent horses in teams of fours or fives along the roads where right and left the rich fields belong to him. There are at the present moment any number of high-born Hungarian noblemen of ancient lineage and large estates who never from year's end to year's end go beyond the boundaries of their own estates. Since the days of their youth and compulsory military service they have never been to the capital; they never go to theatres nor read current fiction. Nature is the only book they know: the varying seasons, the coming rain, the growing calves and foals. There is no social intercourse for them, save among themselves.

Wheat in Central and Lower Hungary, maize in the more eastern parts, are the staple products. Just enough cattle to keep the big house well supplied with milk, butter and meat, very few sheep—and those mostly for the sake of the wool, and a hundred pigs or so, constitute what is technically called out there live stock.

And then there are the horses. Most gentlemen farmers breed horses. The pasture is good, the strain excellent for riding or driving. The Government is the chief customer for good, sound three-year-olds for military purposes. In September every year, the Remount Department sends a commission round to the various horse-breeders to buy up the horses that are suitable for its purpose.

A colonel, two captains, and a veterinary surgeon-captain come to spend a morning at the *château*, entertained by the owner thereof, and to select the horses. For a few hours then a glimpse of the great outside world seems to penetrate within the old walls. The colonel will probably talk of the great military event of the day: the Boer war, the Russo-Japanese, as the case may be. The younger captains will refer to the autumn races in Paris or England.

My lord and my lady listen—interested, and do their best to make the colonel's short stay a pleasant one, while mesdemoiselles sigh involuntarily and vaguely at thoughts of Paris! a fairy, unreal city to them! But this does not last: time is short and business is once more resumed. The colonel selects the horses which my lord has set aside as likely to suit the military authorities, the veterinary surgeon inspects and passes them. A final cup of coffee, a glass of silvorium, and the brilliant band ride away, leaving behind them an echo of gay and distant doings, interesting, perhaps, for the moment, worthy, perhaps, of an indulgent and kindly smile for those ephemeral and senseless forms of pastime, the crowning of kings, the political squabbles, the makings of war and peace.

Then with a sigh of unconscious relief my lord and lady turn towards the orchard, where the apples have to be gathered in, and find absorbing interest in the new malady which this year has affected the old poplar trees, and for the next twelve months happily forget that there is any other land save this land of plenty, any other country save this little, half-forgotten corner in Central Europe.



"The brilliant band ride away."

WHITE WALLS.

By MAX PEMBERTON.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—On her twenty-first birthday the Countess Ulusia, sole heiress of the lords of Rabka, becomes in her own right the richest woman in Austria, and is escorted home from a convent school near Vienna—where she has spent the past fifteen years of her life—by her uncle, a bishop, and Count Rudolph of Trieste, who has managed the vast salt-mines of her ancestral estates during her minority. Count Rudolph has made up his mind to marry the heiress, but she has already gathered vaguely that he has cruelly oppressed the downtrodden populace that toils in her vast, subterranean salt-mines, and she is determined not only to exact an account of his stewardship, but to judge for herself of its wisdom and its humanity. She receives a picturesque welcome from the rough masses in her strange kingdom in the underworld, but soon realises that oppression has brought about a state of ferment bordering on insurrection. The more violent of the rebellious spirits are for throwing off all authority, even if it entails the killing not only of Count Rudolph, but of the young mistress in whose name they are harshly ruled. But Jura the Wise, a young man of unknown parentage, but a born leader of men, is sent by the aged Anna, "the Witch," from the mines to the Castle, with this command: "If she be our enemy, kill her as the people wish; if she be a friend, save her and show her to the people." Reared entirely in the underground world of the mines, but reared in mental culture and refinement by a monk named Arthur, the young idealist is thrilled by the strange beauty of the new world into which he emerges, but mindful of his mission he presents himself at the Castle gates, where, in reply to the query of old Martin, the janitor, "You are from Vienna, sir?" he answers: "Nothing of the sort, old Martin. I come from your dead master, Philip, whom you called the Wise. Lift your lantern and look at me." The old man obeys, his hands trembling as he raises the lantern. What message is this? what fulfilment of the prophecy which has been uttered in the darkness of Rabka a score of years? "I know you, Excellency. I know you!" he cries. Thus Jura obtains a secret audience with the young Countess and tells her of her people's grievances. The police are visiting the people's houses to take their children from them. The old right of Parliament is being denied to them. There is a new scale of fine and punishment, and the people will not suffer it. "This is done in your name," cries Jura to the girl. "If it is not by your will, I will tell the people so." But before she can answer, the door opens and Count Rudolph, with Wasyl, the Chief of the Police of Rabka, enters. "There is the man," says the Count. "Arrest him!" Ulusia intervenes and insists that Jura shall be given safe escort from the Castle; but when daybreak finds him still outside the entrance to the mines, dreaming of his mission into this beautiful new world, he is arrested by Count Rudolph's police. The storm of insurrection breaks, but when the rioters besiege the tower in which their leader is imprisoned, Count Rudolph cries: "I cannot release the prisoner, for he is already free." Then a voice in the crowd cries: "Death to them!" and the Castle of Rabka itself is in flames before an hour has run.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CASTLE IS FIRED.

ULUSIA understood events but little when Count Rudolph went out to reason with the miners. She had neither friend nor counsellor at Rabka—the old Bishop, the amiable Heinrich, having established her in the home of her ancestors, returned to Strepitza, there to drone out his office and to deserve, by his kindliness and charity, the common appellation of "blessed." He would return, he said, when diocesan affairs permitted. Ulusia cared not at all when that might be.

There was, of course, that sour-faced old Baroness, who had been fetched from the whited sepulchre of her gaieties to play the part of companion in the Castle.

The Baroness had but one topic of the table, a topic which concerned the doings and the sayings, the virtues and the lack of virtues, of the great army of males which had delighted to march past her in the great day of her youth. All else gave place to this. A fig for your Rabka! It was very wonderful, of course, and in the scheme of benign Providence that men should toil below the ground to get good money for those who did not toil above. But that a woman should interest herself in such things—impossible!

Ulusia, then, had no one but herself to look to; and, child that she was, her perception did not fail her. She detected the schemer in Rudolph before she had been many hours in Rabka. His attempts to make love to her, and to ape passion he plainly did not feel, were rather pathetic than ludicrous. She knew from the outset that he feared her coming dominion and would hinder it. Perhaps her youth forbade her to realise that he was far from being a clever man; and certainly she was not prepared for that precipitate folly which contrived this night's work, or for the issue so amazing and so inevitable.

The miners were in revolt—why? Was

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it because she had come to Rabka, or because of Rudolph's shrewd diplomacy? She took the latter view; but, being quite frank with herself, she admitted that the whole affair could be dismissed as tiresome but for the chief actor in it. Of money she knew little, nor troubled herself about it. The Castle was gloomy beyond any house of her imagination, and she perceived clearly what they all meant when they said that she would return to Vienna presently and think of the mines no more. She knew that she would have done so if it had not been for Jura the Wise and the words he had spoken. But here was a mystery which passed her comprehension.

Had she not been a little schoolgirl yesterday, taught to believe that the world was a very dreadful place, and chiefly dreadful because men ruled it? As a raging lion, seeking whom he might devour, so the good sisters spoke of man. Ulusia, of course, knew that this was not true; for her good uncle, the Bishop, devoured little except honest mutton, and not even that in Lent; while the only other man of whom she had seen much was her music-master, who taught her to play Chopin's nocturnes and Beethoven's sonatas while Sister Catherine sat in the room and kept her eye on him. Still, he was not of the hungry species; and for the rest, the girls at the convent went in no particular fear of this gruesome fate, and continued nightly to invent their romances of prince and noble, and all the paraphernalia of inevitable marriage.

Ulusia liked the play as well as any of them, although her innocence was absolute. When release came and her uncle conducted her to her father's house, she had been the schoolgirl still, knowing absolutely nothing of life and quite without curiosity. From this state she had passed in an instant into that nebulous region where wonders of revelation awaited her, and all the doubt and fear and hope inseparable from it.

Oh, yes, she thought that she knew now of what the good sisters had spoken when the devouring lion was the theme. If, in reality, she knew little, none the less awakening had come; and at the bidding of one who had seen the sun for the first time in manhood at her desire. This was the miracle; this also the burden of the secret. She knew that she desired to see this man again; she remembered how she had trembled in his presence, been ashamed to look in his face, and fearful that he should discover the rapid beating of her heart because she stood before him. And he was but a miner, a son of the people, and she might as usefully speak of love for him as for any scullion in the Castle kitchen.

* * * * *

She heard the sound from afar, witnessed the departure of the Count, and then remembered that she had neither dressed nor dined. A gong reverberating in the hall reminded her of the lapse, and she ran up the wide stone stairs to her bedroom headlong, to the great dismay of the agitated Baroness, who was descending at that very moment.

"Ah, my dear child, do you not hear the bells? It will all be cold; I perish with hunger."

Dinner was the one and only event of the day for the Baroness von Elwitza—if it were not a little piquet for moderate stakes afterwards—and Ulusia used to declare that a tear stood in her eye for every moment of delay. But she consoled her to-night with the assurance that she would be ready before the waiters had carried in the soup, and so entered her bedroom and began to dress anyhow. Coat and skirt went headlong to the bed; she rapped down her shoes as though they had been hammers; her stockings were thrown to the maid as balls in a game. Clear, cold water—none of the modern creams for Ulusia von Erlach—refreshed her greatly, and she delighted in it and prolonged her ablutions despite the crisis. When this was done and her hair combed with angry violence, she slipped on a Vienna gown as though it were flimsy, and taking brushes from her maid's hands, noticed for the first time the pallor of the girl's face and the evident agitation she suffered.

"What is the matter with you, Claudine?"

The girl was from Paris and proud enough of the fact. But her courage was higher in Paris than in Rabka—and had she not been engaged to serve in Vienna?

"There is everything the matter, madame. The miners are coming here to burn the house. I am surprised that you do not hear them, madame!"

Ulusia put down her brushes on the table and listened intently. Yes, she could hear the sounds now. They rose and fell as the omens of tempest, now waxing, now waning with the mournful note of winds. She had heard the same sounds before to-night, but they had been too distant then for her to understand their deeper meaning. The men, she knew, had come out to demand redressal



"'Do you think that we are in danger, then?'"

of their grievances—it was a common story at Rabka, they told her; but this new ferocity, this howling of human wolves, was beyond all understanding. She put her brushes down and went over to the window. A cold, clear night permitted her to see the whole environment, the distant plain, the white mountains, the terraces descending in steps to the valley. This was some little while after Rudolph had gone to the Eagles' Tower, and a quick glance towards that gloomy prison convinced her that it was not the object of the people's anger. Indeed, the rabble's path was clearly indicated by the torches which lighted it; and these shone as giant fireflies, glowing both upon the hillside and in the valley. Ulusia had seen nothing more picturesque since she came to Rabka. The spectacle fascinated her; she could not quit it.

"Why are you afraid of these people, Claudine?" she asked her maid presently; "you know that they will not come here."

"Do not say it, madame. They have promised to burn the Castle because their leader has been sent to Cracow."

"Who told you this?"

"Herr Albert, the second sergeant of police. The Captain is dead, madame. The people killed him."

"When was the man sent away?"

"I cannot tell you, madame. The sergeant has gone down to the gate to find the Count of Trieste. He says that we must all leave the house immediately."

"Do not listen to such nonsense. We have nothing to fear. Please go down and find out if Count Rudolph has returned."

The trembling maid went off to do her bidding, but Ulusia remained by the window. Was it possible that Jura had been sent to Cracow, after all? And did the people think that this was her work? Oh, she would never suffer that. She perceived that the hour had come to justify herself. She must tell these madmen the truth—face them unflinchingly—she, who stood in the great Philip's house and was the last of the Von Erlachs.

It was a courageous purpose, and it pleased her. When the maid returned, she discovered her mistress quietly dressing before the mirror and entirely unmoved. To her feverish outburst Ulusia answered in monosyllables. Sergeant Albert had returned. There was dreadful news—everyone must leave the Castle immediately. The Count himself had escaped the fury of the mob by riding for his life towards Cracow. He would have been killed but for the sabres of the police—he would certainly have perished had he attempted to return to the house.

"Oh, madame, madame!" sobbed the terrified woman, "it is you they seek, it is you they threaten—you, who have never done anyone any harm in all your life!"

Ulusia might have reflected at any other time upon the dishonesty of this gratuitous testimonial, but she was pleased with the girl's candour, and telling her not to be silly nor to believe everything the soldiers told her, she went downstairs to learn the truth for herself.

Here she found pandemonium awaiting her. The agitated Baroness had fainted, after the fashion of the conventions, and was at that very moment being fanned by the awkward hands of the steward Franz. A young lieutenant of police, who had come up from the terrace at the risk of his life, gabbled incoherent instructions to the sergeant. Beyond these stood the establishment, cooks, maids, scullions, footmen, as white a faced company as ever the great hall of Rabka had known. And Ulusia, wearing the superb gown which Vienna had sent, came among them as a queen—for such was their subsequent admission.

It was a striking picture—the open door of the great crimson dining-room; the table shining beneath its burden of historic silver; the hall itself, with the ancient paintings and the gorgeous Italian ceiling—and beneath its dome this affrighted company. Verily had Ulusia need of her courage; for what consolation might be spoken with justice? what fair answer could she give to them?

"You have come from the Count, lieutenant?" she asked, turning to the soldier.

He told her that it was so.

"I forced my horse through the press, Excellency—there were shots fired, but I am among the lucky ones. The lord Count has ridden to Cracow—there should be cavalry here before the morning—he may overtake the troop which is returning. I pray to God that it may be so, Countess."

"Do you think that we are in danger, then?"

"I think there will not be a stone of this house remaining to-morrow if the soldiers do not come, Excellency."

"Then what do you wish me to do?"

"To leave at once by the mountain road; the stables are guarded, and we can get the carriages out—if you go immediately, Excellency."

"It shall be as you wish, lieutenant.

Conduct her Excellency to the carriage. The servants will go at once—they have my permission. You will see to it, lieutenant."

"But you yourself, Excellency!"

"I will tell you when I am ready."

He understood her to mean that she would accompany the others, and was far too concerned for them all to understand her truly. As for the servants, they might have been released from some dreadful prison-house, so wild was their joy. It was each for himself, and the devil take the hindermost; and they trooped out together, laughing or crying with joy, as the mood took them. When they were gone, the Baroness also consented to be led from the hall; she was both blind and deaf with her fears, and incapable of knowing who went and who remained. Ah, dear God! that one had left the civilisation of Vienna to come among these savages!

Ulusia waited patiently until all but Franz, the steward, were gone, and then she surprised him by a commonplace confession.

"I am very hungry, Herr Franz," she said; "do you think I could have some dinner?"

He looked at her with astonished eyes, saying surely this was the great Philip's daughter; and without another word he led the way to the dining-room and began to serve the dinner. For that matter, the raging wolves without had settled down to their work in grimmer fashion now; and for the moment their howls were stilled. From time to time, it is true, a savage roar went up; but when it passed, a stillness as of the ultimate night prevailed, and you could hear the very fires crackling in the vast grates of Castle Rabka.

"At what time are the cavalry expected, Herr Franz?" she asked, after a little interval of waiting.

The steward rejoined with new hope of her departure—

"By midnight, if the messengers overtake them. We do not know if that is possible, Excellency. It will be dawn otherwise."

"Are all the gates locked, Herr Franz?"

"They are all locked, Excellency. My father has seen to that."

"Is your father here, then?"

"He is below at this moment, Excellency."

"Cannot he tell us anything of what the men are doing, Herr Franz?"

"I will summon him if your Excellency wishes."

She rejoined "Immediately," and he left her to bring in the old man. When Martin appeared presently, one might have said that this night's work had given him back his lost youth. To Ulusia he paid particular homage, regarding her very curiously and speaking as though the three in that room were in possession of a secret of which Rabka was ignorant.

"You sent for me, Excellency."

"Certainly—are you not the last of my establishment who remains faithful?"

"The last, Excellency; but I shall count for more than one to-night."

"They say that the Tower has given up its prisoner—when would that have been, Herr Martin?"

The old man drew near to the table and bent to whisper, as though the confession moved him to awe.

"He tore the bar asunder as boughs are bent. He has gone to the mountains, Excellency. But he will return. We know that he will return."

"Then you know the man's story, Herr Martin!"

He opened his eyes wide at this.

"Who does not remember the proverb? I would name him among a thousand."

"You would name him—is he not the boatman whom they call Jura the Wise?"

The old man shook his head.

"I have waited for this twenty years, Excellency, but my heart is glad because of it. The people will know it when the time comes, and then——"

"Oh!" she said, rising as a crashing sound of heavy blows upon a door made her pulses leap, "assuredly I have come to a house of fools! Why do you not open to my people, Herr Martin? Are they not waiting for me?"

He uttered a cry of amazement.

"They are mad, mad!" he exclaimed, "but the hour will pass, and then will be the time to speak reason."

"No; the time is now, Martin. I am going to them; I will hear what they want with me."

She crossed the hall, the two men powerless to forbid, and opening a pair of French windows, stepped out upon a balcony above the great doorway which is Rabka's boast. The sudden flashing of the light out upon the blackness stilled the mob for an instant; then it recognised by what means light had come, and with a roar as of a mountain split asunder it belched its accusation.

"Death to the woman—death to her!"

Ulusia heard the words very clearly, but she did not flinch from them. A voice, prevailing above the uproar, whispered in her

ear the traditions of her house and of the great Philip's name. Perhaps her situation helped her. She seemed to stand so far above these people—not only in station, but in the tourney of reason and justice.

Looking down to the terraces below, she beheld the rabble pressing hither and thither, but had no idea that they were set upon a purpose. Let them rage, then, to their hearts' content—was not every gate barred? So she said at the beginning, imploring them with outstretched hands to hear her.

Their anger she despised; their threats she mocked. What wrong had she done to them, what reparation had she to make?

Now, this was the beginning of it; but anon a change befell. Old Martin was the first to observe the truth, but to his cry was joined immediately that of his son Franz. The miners, these madmen from the depths, had fired the stables, and the flames leaped already to the lower storeys of the western wing. Oh, you could see the mountains shaping just as though the day had come; the snow shone as a molten field, and every tree dripped jewels of radiance. Let there be talk of bolt and bar, what availed it now? The faces of the terror-stricken men confessed the peril of the situation. They trembled as frightened children, they implored their mistress to make an end of it.

"Excellency, Excellency! do you not see what they have done?"

"I see it perfectly, Herr Franz. The stables are on fire. Well, someone must be punished for this."

"But the chapel is burning, Excellency. We shall perish here!"

"Go, go, my friends!" she cried; "go, for Heaven's sake!"

They knew not how to answer her. Mocking laughter from the mob below awakened new impulses of anger, but did not convince her of peril. And yet the builders of a thousand years ago were no match for those who brought naphtha to their task and blasted the giant walls with dynamite. Nay, the mine helped the enemies of those who owned the mine. Huge ruffians, black with their labours, surged upwards to the day to say that Rabka's Castle should come down. The air seethed with flame of burning spirit. The whole earth quaked when the dynamite was fired.

Now, this was a fearful hour, and of all who lived through it, none lifted a prouder head than Ulusia von Erlach.

The very terror of the spectacle fascinated her, nor could she yet imagine its possible sequel. Girt about by seething flame, the Castle now stood up amid the mountains as a monument to the centuries, proud, defiant, impregnable. Crashing explosions tore the walls of the outbuildings asunder; calcined stones were hurled upwards as shells from a mortar; there were rivers and lakes of flame, running hither and thither and scaring even the howling madmen who had kindled them. But the great building itself—surely that would outlive the night? Ulusia for one believed it to be so. It seemed to her childish imagination a great thing to stand here as the queen of this fiery sea, unharmed by it, proud above it, even, it might be, powerful to quell it by a miracle. The men were wiser. They knew that doom was closing about them.

"Excellency, do you wish that we should perish?"

She waved them from her, with a hand whose jewels gave back the radiance of fire.

"Have I not told you to go?" she cried. "Why do you not obey me?"

The steward Franz would have answered this with some attempt at honest argument, but the old man drew him aside and spoke to his mistress.

"We wait in vain, Excellency," he said; "the hour has not yet come. I beseech you to hear us."

"Of what hour are you speaking?" Herr Martin?"

"Of the hour when he shall return, Excellency."

"Oh, a fable, a fable! Why do not these people hear me? Have I not the right of the guilty, if they believe me that? What madness has come upon them?"

"The oppression of years, Excellency, demanding judgment. The hour will repay them for all they have suffered. They will hear reason—but justice will have passed them by."

"Then let justice find its champion—I shall perish with Rabka. If it is my fate, very well. You know what the lord Philip would have done."

He stammered an assent, praying in his heart that the great walls of the Castle would yet withstand the fire. Ulusia, on the other hand, perceived that fire was not the only danger; for pressing through the throng, followed everywhere by the frantic cheers of the multitude, a man came to the threshold of the porch and there cried to those behind him to bring a ladder. Soon the cry went up that this was Jura the Wise, and that he had escaped from his



"They saw Jura lift the Lady Ulusia in his arms and re-enter the house."

jailors; and upon this there were five hundred hands outstretched to touch if it were but the hem of his garment. But he thrust the people back brutally, and climbing the ladder they set up, found himself still fifteen feet from the balcony above. Now he must go up by the pillar's help, climbing as a seaman, and kicking the ladder from him while he stretched out iron fingers and touched the balustrade. He was up now, the people cried. A thousand voices shouted a horrid pæan of victory. They believed that he would throw the woman's body down to them—they waited for the tragedy.

For an instant silence fell as the man dragged himself to the balustrade and climbed it. A wondering people, ready enough to discern a treachery, beheld old Martin, the gatekeeper, flopping on his knees and bowing his head in abject worship; they saw Jura lift the Lady Ulusia in his arms and re-enter the house; they could almost hear the steward Franz imploring his father to quit the scene; and then, as though understanding came to them, in a twinkling they uttered such a shout of baffled rage and fury that the very mountains rang with it.

He had betrayed them—their chosen! He was the woman's friend, after all! Let the truth be known, let the oath of vengeance be heard above every message of the night. He had betrayed them! Let him perish in the holocaust; for what avenue of escape might be found?

They laughed ferociously and went anew to their task. Such a beacon had not been kindled in Galicia since the Turk was driven out.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GALLERY OF CAVERNS.

ULUSIA opened her eyes to wonder how long she had slept, and why her sleep had been so heavy.

For a little while she believed that she was in the great bedroom of Castle Rabka, that melancholy chamber of a hundred stories, draped heavily with the fine stuffs of a hundred years ago, and painted by the artist, Wachter, in the style of Giorgione. But when she lifted her eyes and looked to the ceiling above her, she perceived that it was like the ceiling of a tomb, hewn from the cold rock and glimmering with the grey light a cavern had filtered. Then she thought that she must be dreaming, and for a little while she lay quite still and closed her eyes again.

What a sleep it had been—what scenes had it not revealed to her! The beginning of these she did not remember very clearly, but one scene haunted her by its vivid memories, and was not to be banished from her mind.

She had been a prisoner in her own Castle, and while she was a prisoner the people had fired it. Someone, she knew not who, had carried her from the burning Castle, across a little bridge, below which the fire raged furiously. Oh, she could see it all so clearly—the great keep towering above a sea of flame; the fiery furnace below; the bridge itself bursting into flame, and men who called to her to hasten. Again and again she heard those maddened shouts as the light woodwork trembled at every footstep, and the breath of the flame seemed to be breathed upon their very faces. But they had made a safe transit—and then——!

It was all confused enough, but, despite her effort, she could not disbelieve in it. The cries which had attended her passage to safety, the scorching fire, the black road beyond—had they not been real enough in the hours of sleep? And the name of the man by whom salvation had been won—that came to her at last as upon a flash. Oh, yes, yes, he had been the boatman whom they called Jura the Wise. Ulusia said it was a wild dream in truth, and then she opened her eyes again and looked about her.

Now she lay upon a wooden bed in a circular cave of the eastern galleries of Rabka. Opposite her couch a jagged hole in the rock permitted a vast fire of logs to send its smoke up a natural chimney. A round wooden table stood in the centre of the room and had four ancient chairs, covered in velvet and gold brocade, for its ornament. Upon the wall a clock ticked merrily enough, and was faced by a full-length portrait of the great lord Philip. But perhaps the richest possession of this strange abode was a vast Turkey carpet spread upon the floor of rock, and glowing with such a wealth of colours as only the East can make tolerable. Upon this the daylight fell dimly from narrow loopholes high up in the side of the cavern. But the room was without tenant, and Ulusia had been awake for some few minutes before another entered.

The illusion of dreams passes more swiftly than we think, and this day of awakening was to prove no exception for Ulusia von Erlach. She had but to be quite sure that she slept no longer, when the whole truth of

yesternight revealed itself, and she remembered how she had escaped from the Castle, and by whose agency.

The events of the night now presented themselves one by one and were viewed without distortion. She remembered the departure of the Baroness and the servants, the cryptic warnings uttered by old Martin, the dinner she had eaten, the visit to the balcony. And then she saw the strong face of the man Jura as he pressed through the rabble below and climbed to her side.

Oh, yes, he had apprehended the danger—he knew what the people meant, and he had saved her from them. She remembered how savagely he had clasped her in his arms and carried her to the mountain gate. She would never forget the pathetic earnestness of his question when he asked if she were hurt. For who should have hurt her, and how? Not until she sat up upon the couch could she understand this; but when she did so, she perceived that her shoulder was swathed in bandages, while the slightest movement gave her pain.

Again she lay and tried to sleep. A little while, and she became aware that someone had entered the cavern stealthily and watched her as she lay.

Then she discovered the old woman Anna, dressed in a gown of pure white, and wearing upon her head a veil in the Greek fashion. Once before, upon a day of Thanksgiving, had Ulusia seen this harridan of the people's tales. How greatly had superstition belied her; what a very kindly old woman she seemed, after all!

"Is it you, Mother Anna?"

"Yes, yes, Excellency—it is I."

"What has happened to me, mother? Why am I here?"

"To save you from the people, Excellency?"

"Oh, yes, that I understand; but why do the people wish me harm, mother?"

"You shall ask my son, and he will tell you. Hark! I hear his step."

She listened with bent ear to some sound which penetrated the rock, while a spasm of fear crept upon her, and her hand closed convulsively upon the monstrous oak bludgeon she carried. Ah, if they were discovered here! If the soldiers who were hunting the mountains for Anna's son should come! The dread of that made the old woman's heart quake. The sounds terrified her as an omen.

"That is not my son's step. What then, Excellency? But he will tell us—if they have not taken him, Excellency—if the people have not killed him."

"The people! Is he not their leader?"

The old woman looked up proudly.

"He was, and will be again when the hour comes. He shall tell you, Excellency."

"Your son, mother?"

The old woman rested upon her staff and looked at the speaker with a cunning face.

"You ask me a question, child. What have they said to you?"

"They have said nothing. But I do not think Jura is your son."

"He is more to me than any son. And he saved you from the flames last night. Shall I give him a new name, Excellency? Does this fall harshly on your ears? Would you have the priest to baptise him again? Nay, nay; he is my son yet a little while; but when the hour shall come, he will be son to me no longer."

A quiver shook her frame as she uttered the words; she lifted her eyes as though some vision of past happiness tormented her; then bending her ear quickly, she listened again for a sound of footsteps.

"He is coming—my son—he will tell you, Excellency; he will speak."

A quick step upon the corridor of stone was plainly audible to them both, and presently Jura stood in the door of the cavern, a rifle in his hand, and a bag about his shoulder. Listening a moment, as though fearing a possible pursuit, he threw the bag to the floor presently and cried for Stephen, whereon a half-witted lad emerged from the shadow of the corridor and relieved him of his burdens.

"So her Excellency is awake, mother. Is all prepared for her?"

"It is prepared, my son."

"Would she wish to see me, Anna Mother?"

"Oh, yes, yes, I wish it!" exclaimed Ulusia, and he entered the cavern immediately and, doffing his cap, knelt by her couch and touched her hands with his lips.

"My mother has told you everything. Excellency."

"She has told me little——"

"For a good reason; for what is not known is better untold. Let me make her silence good. They have burned Rabka to the ground—your house is in ashes; we carried you here because of the people. You shall go hence when it is safe. Excellency, there is nothing else to say, but you shall tell us much that we would know."

She watched his handsome face, for the

eyes looked deep into her own, and the hand which touched her wrists burned as living coal.

"How came I by this?" she asked, indicating her wounded arm. He answered her with bent head.

"There were those who had rifles in their hands—they stood among the people. So I shielded you with my arms, Excellency—but clumsily. This much you shall forgive. What my mother cannot do, no doctor in Galicia may make good. It would be death to summon one here—to-day."

"I do not wish it, Jura," she rejoined, calling him by his name for the first time since she had known him. "Oh, I know that I am among friends; I have understood that from the beginning."

A shadow crossed his face.

"Friends who have contrived this," he said—"that your house lies in ashes, and the people cry for your death! But they will yet be ashamed. Rabka shall rise again; the people will kneel before you. So much I swear, so much I shall live to accomplish."

She rested silently a little while, and then she asked him the question she had just put to his mother.

"You have another name," she said; "you have not always been called Jura the Wise?"

"In my childhood," he said quite simply, "they called me Philip."

"The name of my uncle——"

"In honour of his name. Then came the day when the Monk Arthur, whose pupil I was, wished it otherwise. He named me Jura. I have been so called ever since."

She thought upon it musingly, but would not pursue the point. Her next question was commonplace. Where was this place? how had they fled to such a shelter? He told her in short, crisp phrases, the words of a man given to deeds, but not to speech.

"This is one of the caverns of the eastern gallery. It lies beyond the ken of police and people. They say my mother and I alone have the key to it. I brought you here until the people shall recover their reason, and understand what they have done. I do not know when that day will be."

"But the soldiers who were to come from Cracow?"

He smiled.

"There is a squadron of cavalry about the ashes of your home; another patrols the mountains. If they discover the road to the eastern gallery, then my duty is done, and you shall go with them. I cannot say if that will be. You need all my mother's skill for many days yet, Excellency. Let that be sufficient."

She did not remonstrate, but begged him to tell her of yesternight and the flight. By what road had they escaped? how had he found his way to this place? This loosed his tongue, and he narrated the story in the simple words of a man who knew neither vanity nor humiliation.

"My mother sent the lad Stephen to the Tower. I forced the bars and climbed down to him. He showed me the place on the mountains where the old shaft leads down to the gallery of caverns, and there he waited for me. Your servants were my guides thereto. I left them on the hillside, whence they would cross the valley to Cracow to-day. But the lad brought us hither where my mother waited. A hundred years ago the mad Count Robert, your great grandfather, built these apartments, that he might hide from the world. They were forgotten a hundred years, but known to the great Philip—and to my mother. To her we owe salvation; let that not be forgotten when the hour comes."

He stood up now, and taking the old woman in his arms, he kissed her on both cheeks, very tenderly, as a true son who understood.

"Her Excellency has need of you, mother," he said; "let me not intrude. I go to see what the soldiers are doing. But fear nothing. There is no foot in Galicia which shall track me in the caverns. You know there is not, Anna Mother."

She bent her head and kissed his hand, the act of one who worshipped rather than of one who loved; and he strode away, his step ringing through the caverns, as though by its boldness to give her confidence. Anna, herself going to the fire, began to stir a mess which cooked thereon, and brought it presently to Ulusia's side.

"Here is that which no doctor may better," she said in a proud voice. "Drink, my child, and let me call you 'daughter.'"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GIRL MATHILDE.

MATHILDE entered the cavern upon tiptoe and peered at the couch whereon Ulusia lay. This would have been about four of the afternoon, when the last rays of the wan light had given place to shadows, and the glimmer of the ebbing fire alone illumined that weird retreat.

She was a tall and shapely girl, black-haired and wild—feet naked, her eyes afire, her bosom bared. Met upon the roadside, she would have been named for an Egyptian; but here she was serving-maid to Mother Anna, and she had come up from the lower galleries to tell her story.

"Is it you, Anna Mother?"

She crept forward, looking alternately to the bed and the great chair by the chimney. When she perceived that the old woman was no longer in the room, she advanced boldly to Ulusia's side and knelt there as one contemplating speech, but afraid.

"Who are you, girl?"

"I am Mathilde, Excellency, servant to Mother Anna."

"How is it that I have not seen you before?"

"I have been to the Black Gallery, Excellency, where we used to live. The soldiers are there now; we shall not go there any more."

"Have you come to tell Mother Anna this?"

"Yes, Excellency, and to ask how you do?"

"I am better, Mathilde. Mother Anna is so clever. I shall not be here very long."

"They think you dead, Excellency. They are saying in the mine that you perished with Herr Jura in the house. I heard them as I lay hidden. They will never seek you here, Excellency."

"Then I shall go to them to-morrow, Mathilde."

The girl stared in wild affright.

"If Herr Jura is taken, they will shoot him, Excellency. It is safe for you to go, but for him it is death. Will you not remember that—for pity's sake?"

Her eyes flashed with the words, her bosom heaved. Ulusia thought her a majestic figure of distress, but her very alarm betrayed her.

"Why do you speak to me like this, Mathilde? What is Herr Jura to you, then?"

Mathilde cast down her eyes and plucked with trembling fingers at the bare stone floor.

"He is the man I love, Excellency."

"And, loving him, you fear that I shall harm him?"

"Yes, yes, because you do not know the truth. When you go from us, Excellency, will you not say that Jura is dead?"

"If I go, Mathilde! Would it not, then, be better for him that I stay?"

Mathilde half closed her eyes, as though she were dreaming.

"Your friends seek you—you must go to them, Excellency—when it is safe. I will lead you; I will say that you were with me. If it could be soon, then I think it would be better for Herr Jura's safety. But you will know; you are wise and you will know."

Ulusia thought upon it a little while and then she asked a question.

"Is not Herr Jura the son of Mother Anna?"

"You know that he is not, Excellency."

It was said in such simple good faith that Ulusia knew not how to receive it.

"I know—indeed, I know nothing but what they tell me. Whose son is he, then?"

Mathilde crouched upon the floor and answered almost as one who muttered her thought rather than addressed another.

"They say that he is the son of the dead lord Philip. The child died and was buried in the chapel of Rabka, but the child has come to life again and will be the master of the people. Oh, it is a fable, and yet the people have such faith. He is dead, but risen, and he will lead them. Look at Herr Jura's face, and it is to answer all the questions—the dead lord Philip who died because they took his son from him. That is what they say in the mine, Excellency."

"And you, who know him, believe it, Mathilde?"

"I believe it, Excellency; it is more to me than the faith of the priests."

"You believe it because you love him?"

"Yes, yes, because I love him, Excellency."

She looked her questioner full in the face, not ashamed now, but flushing with the pride of confession. This was her attitude when Mother Anna entered the cavern to discover her and bring her to her feet with a harsh rebuke.

Mathilde, shrinking from the words, buried her face in her hands and fled from the place. Outcast, drudge, believing herself to be without a friend in the world, she could still believe that God owed her some signal recompense which, but for yesternight, she might be about to win. Who was this strange woman to come thus upon the path of her happiness and to destroy it? Those vain dreams of her sleep, by what justice were they dispelled? Anger uncontrollable seized upon her as she reflected upon all that must happen when the truth were known, and the son of Philip reigned at Rabka. Mother Anna, meanwhile, had seated herself by Ulusia's bed and watched her closely. What had the girl said, what truth had she spoken?

"Do not heed Mathilde, my child; she is

one of the dreamers. What said she, then? what child's tale has she been telling?"

"She spoke of Jura, mother. She believes that he is Count Philip's son."

The old woman betrayed no anger.

"Was that hidden from you, then, Excellency?"

"I did not think of it, mother. If it is so, he is my kinsman. Why, then, has he kept it from the world?"

"Because, my child, the world would not hear him."

"You mean, mother, that there are no proofs of this?"

"There are proofs, child, but the man in whose keeping they lay has been dead these three years. The Count, our master, banished him from Rabka because he feared the fables. Think you that otherwise the lord Philip's son would wear the robes of bondage? We cannot prove what we know to be. The tomb stands between the living and the dead."

"But it shall stand no longer, mother. Oh, surely justice must be done!"

Mother Anna shook her head.

"If it lay with thee, child! You know not of what you speak. None the less, I believe it to be his destiny. The day will come, and the world will know, and he will go forth to reign—my son who has yet to see the cities of the world and to learn to live."

She rose up, as though unwilling to speak of it again. From without the cavern there came a low sound of knocking, and anon Jura entered with a swift foot.

"The soldiers are driving the people from the old workings," he said quietly. "If her Excellency wishes it, I will tell them that she is here."

Ulusia answered without a moment's hesitation.

"I do not wish it, Jura. I will stay with Mother Anna."

CHAPTER XV.

THE JOURNEY TO STREPITZA.

THE carriage was to be on the Strepitza road at half-past five o'clock—time enough, Mother Anna said, to make the journey to the Bishop's palace and to find excellent Heinrich at his prayers or his dinner, as the chance of it should decide.

Ulusia cared little how it might be. She wondered that this hour of her deliverance found her so indifferent. She was to return to the world which believed that she had perished, and to know Rabka no more. Never again, it might be, would she visit this wonderland of the subterranean kingdom or suffer the spell of it to enchant her. The romance and tragedy of the few brief days spent as Mother Anna's guest were over.

Jura had been the instrument of this, nor would he suffer an alternative. The first day had carried to the palace the news that she lived, and that the mine harboured her. She was hurt, but not seriously, the messenger had been commanded to say. A few days would see her in her uncle's house, when she would tell him of all that had befallen her. Hereafter they were hours of reckoning and of subterfuge. She had no courage to tell herself why she lingered.

Her wound had been superficial, and healed quickly to Mother Anna's touch. There had been no more talk of the lord Philip's son except upon that fateful night. Day by day, as very fugitives from justice, the man and the girl went forth to see her heritage and to view the realms of darkness as though they were the gardens of the earth. To her questions about his past and the life which must have been the living death, he answered vaguely, that his imagination had been his world and had not tricked him, but the memory of the Sun god was ever with him; and now that the oath had been broken, he would go every day to a high place of the gallery and worship as any pagan at a shrine of fire. Hither Ulusia followed him on the morning of the fourth day, and here she watched him at his orisons.

They stood upon a high place in the great hollow of the mountains, in a gallery of Nature's buildings, poised above a gaunt ravine where raced a river that defied the frosts. Above them were a hundred angry pinnacles of the jagged rocks; vast walls of weather-worn salt; the frozen steeps of snow-bound summits—the towers of Nature's solemn temple. Inexpressibly grand, remote from all Rabka's life, a haven of eternal twilight in its depths—here Jura would behold the rising sun and kneel in awe and reverence. To the child's rebuke he answered simply: "I have found the emblem of my God," and superstition did not dictate the act, nor ignorance; the faith taught him by the Monk Arthur lost nothing by this pagan worship.

"My dreams have shown me many things, but this never," he said. "What the pictures and a child's memory could teach me of the



"'They say that he is the son of the dead lord Philip.'"

world, that I learned from the priest. But who shall tell of the glory of the day? What pen shall write the truths of even one beam which falls from yonder sun upon the eyes of him who sees for the first time?"

She had surprised Jura in many moods, but never in such a mood as this. The day, she thought, robbed him of his manhood. Down there amid the caverns he was king indeed, but here in the sunlight he stood as a little child to worship.

"I will send for you to Vienna," she said in comment. "I will show you the cities, Jura. Oh, I can understand what your life has been. I know—I *know*—but now, are you not free now? Will you be the prisoner of this place any more?"

"You ask me what I cannot tell you, Excellency; for what are the cities to me, and who will guide me thither? Is not my home Rabka? have not I my duties among the people? For you it is otherwise. You will go to Vienna and reign there. It is your destiny. You will marry and have children—such must be your part. But my place is here; I have my work to do."

"None the less, you will come to Vienna," she said. "I have dreamed of that so many nights since first I saw you. At Vienna we shall meet again, Jura."

He turned and looked at her, searching her eyes and watching the roseate flecks upon the cheeks which betrayed her. He knew—this son of Rabka's darkness knew; but of that his lordship did not dare to speak, and he hastened to speak of other things, as though afraid of the vision he himself had conjured up.

"You will not return to this place," he said; "it is not fit that you should do so. For me it is different. I have no place in the cities—I do not even know their tongue. What men call education is chiefly the knowledge of their fellow-men. I have none of it. The experience they call pleasure is unknown to me. When the madness has passed, I shall go back to my boats, unless my destiny call me elsewhere. Sometimes I feel that this must be. I am afraid of your world; I long for it, but am afraid."

"But I will give you courage, Jura; I will teach you. Oh, if you knew how different you are from any man I have met! To meet you is to step out of the world we live in and to go back five hundred years. When you come to Vienna, I will be your teacher. Will you not learn with me?"

He smiled sadly.

"At Vienna," he said, "you would be ashamed to say that Jura the Wise was known to you."

She protested that it could not be, but unavailingly. He adhered firmly to the belief that his youth had made such association impossible. A desire to avoid the topic and to divert her thoughts led him to propose that she should see something of the eastern galleries before she left; and to this she assented readily.

"We may meet soldiers," he said, "but I think not. However it be, that is a day which will not long be postponed. I do not fear it. The madness has passed, and my people judge me soberly. There will be no soldiers at Rabka on the day that you leave us. Beware of those who counsel you to return."

"Then your people desire that the Count of Trieste shall be their master, Jura?"

"It is not in the people's mind to name a master at all. He will govern us while it is appointed—but according to the laws. You will have your fine house in Vienna, and remember this place with disfavour if you remember it at all. That is human nature. You are a child, and your life is before you. Better that it should be lived in the sunshine than in such a place as this."

He would hear no argument to the contrary, and as though to emphasise his words he led her through a winding passage of the rock down to the black gallery and the nether world. Here he had lived so many years. This haunted labyrinth had been the home of his security. He showed her many a cavern where the bones of men and women marked ancient tragedies of the darker years; he was her guide through treacherous caves, black as the heart of Erebus, and unspeakable in their suggestion of hidden phantom terrors; with him she passed safely by the brink of many a hidden chasm; through great vaulted apartments, any one of which would have harboured a mighty cathedral. And as last, as it were, by some secret way to which years had given the key, he brought her to a loop-hole of the rock whence she could look over the waters of the lake and see the home in which his later years were lived.

"Fourteen years," he said, "I lived with the Monk Arthur in yonder house. All that I knew he taught me. With him I went hunting where neither soldier nor police would go. There was no evil of this place into whose face he would not look—no leper he spurned. We lived such a life as the books name savage; we had guns in our hands, and hunted the galleries for such

game as comes in winter-time from the hills above. Once every year we went up to the cathedral for Thanksgiving; but our chapel was hewn out of yonder rock, and therein we worshipped. Sometimes he has taken me to the streets and *cafés*, and shown me what the pleasures of men may be. At other times he has fled with me to the eastern gallery, and lain hidden many a week. 'The day would come,' he said; but here was a prophet whom they banished, and who will return to Rabka no more."

"How did you hear of his death, Jura?"

"There is nothing done above of which the mine does not hear. We have your newspapers from Vienna; we read your books. The Monk died upon an island of the Adriatic, and the Count sent the news down to us. I mourned a year, for this man was a father to me."

"And you still regard this house as a home?"

"If it is so ordained, I will live there until the end of my days."

* * * * *

They returned to Mother Anna at an early hour, and thereafter all the talk was of departure.

Ulusia would go to her uncle's house, and there the truth must be told. Whatever the Count might have planned, she had the will, and she believed the power, to circumvent it. Let the soldiers arrest the man who had saved her life, and she would venture her own life to save him. What a romance it had been! what a story of wonder and of tragedy! Naturally she perceived that it was no story of yesterday, but of wrongs long suffered, and finding in her advent this dramatic expression. The people had no grievance against her—reflection had taught them so much already; but the *régime* at Rabka, the monotonous labour, the darkness, the tyranny they had suffered at the Count's hands, contrived this revolution of an hour and justified it. She, Ulusia, had been but the scapegoat. A man's cleverness put the burden upon her shoulders.

Henceforth all this must be changed. She knew not how nor why, but was going back to the world with brave resolutions. A few weeks had transformed her; she was the little schoolgirl no longer, but a woman who had looked deep into the heart of human misery and had shed bitter tears because of it. Alone she could do nothing—so much she knew well; but with a strong man's help, ah, what could she not then accomplish!

"I shall go to Strepitza to-morrow, and my uncle will hear the truth," she said to Mother Anna at the moment of farewell. "If he will not help me, I shall ask General Wagner, who was so kind to me in Vienna, to speak for me and see that justice is done. Send to me at my uncle's house should any danger threaten you. And never forget that your son has saved my life."

Here was the bond between them—Jura had saved her life, and his own might be in jeopardy thereby. Down there in the cavern they knew nothing of what the world was saying above: of the story of the Rabka *émeute* as the papers had told it; of her reported death and the account given of the rebel ringleader. None believed that Count Feodor's daughter had survived the night of tragedy. Rudolph of Trieste had applied already to the courts to be established in his governorship.

And upon this Ulusia went forth, almost openly, Jura accompanying her to the carriage which waited upon the mountain road, and the old woman kneeling to receive her blessing. Never would the mistress of Rabka forget that night, the moon shining upon the mountain, the distant view of the town across the plain, the white, starlit heaven, the magnificent figure of him who had been called the lord Philip's son.

"You will come when I send for you," she said, as he stooped and kissed her hand.

"Yes," he said, "if you send, I will come."

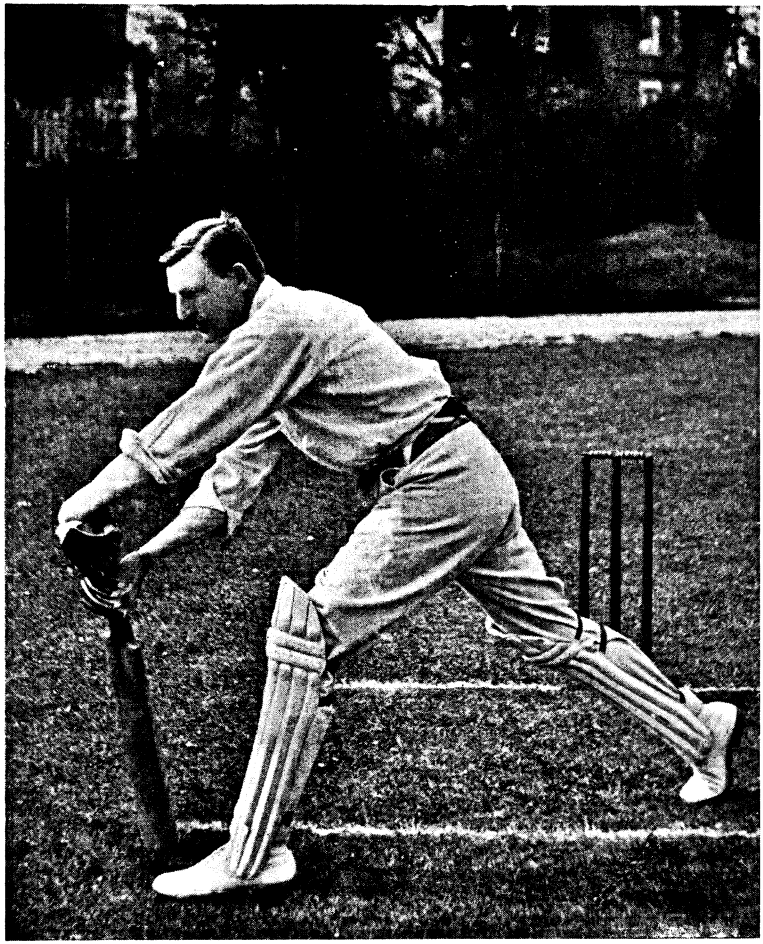
"To my house in Vienna, where I will show you the cities."

"If Rabka is in your thoughts when this night is forgotten, let your messenger come to the house upon the island. There I will await him."

"It will not be many days," she said quietly, and then: "God keep you, Jura, and give you strength!"

He gave an order to the coachman—for this was a carriage sent by old Martin the gatekeeper—and the man touched his horses and put them to a gentle trot down the steep path leading to the valley. Long Jura watched the carriage as the moonlight showed it to him against the curtain of the driven snow, and its lamps illumined the mists in the hollows. It had been lost to his sight for more than an hour when, awaking as from a reverie, he turned about and climbed the steep which led to the cavern's mouth.

(*To be continued.*)



A. O. JONES.

COUNTY CAPTAINS.

BY SIR HOME GORDON, BART.

Photographs by E. Hawkins & Co., Brighton.

CRICKET is now in full swing, and despite the tremendous interest excited by Test Matches it may be confidently asserted that what the public loves best is county cricket. I have witnessed the bulk of the encounters between England and Australia and between England and South Africa in this country, but rarely when stumps were pitched did I notice the same electric thrills of popular interest that are to be felt in the matches between Yorkshire and Lancashire, or sometimes, in the 'nineties, in the Bank Holiday match at the Oval between Surrey and Notts. I have heard of the exceptional keenness characterising the fixtures between Worcestershire and Warwickshire, I know the exhilaration of yore when Somersetshire came up to do battle with Middlesex on Whit Monday, and who that loves cricket and has had the good fortune to have been there does not preserve the happiest memories of the Canterbury Week?

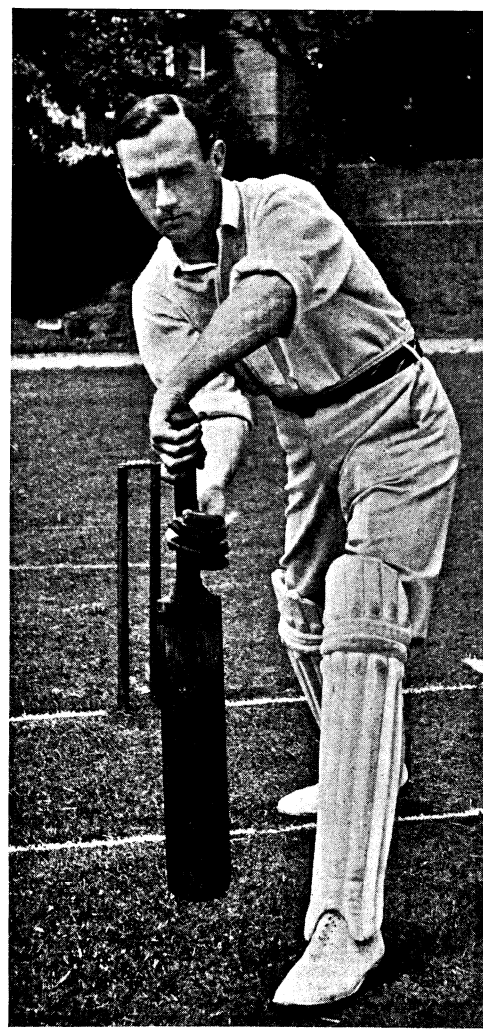
Yes, in the year when the Australians are



A. C. MacLAREN.

made welcome among us, I have the temerity to exalt county cricket. Be it noted that not a single cricketer has ever represented England against a Colonial invader in this country who had not first won fame in county cricket. Altogether seventy-five Englishmen have played in the thirty-four Test Matches against Australia on our native soil, of which we have won fifteen and lost six. Northamptonshire and Leicestershire have given no representatives, but Surrey has provided twelve, Notts eleven, and Yorkshire and Lancashire ten each. Two of the present county captains, Messrs. A. O. Jones and G. L. Jessop, have played in Test Matches here, two others, Messrs. McGahey and P. F. Warner in Australia, while no less than fourteen past and present county captains have been chosen to do battle for the Mother Country.

It is impossible to overestimate the value to a county team of a good captain. That fine judge Major Trevor has observed: "With all the knowledge now at our disposal we do not seem to see proportionately better captains of sides than we saw five-and-twenty years ago. Yet improvement in this respect is more imperative for success than anything else." Remembering Lord Harris, Messrs. A. G. Steel, A. N. Hornby, J. Shuter, A. E. Stoddart, and Sir Timothy O'Brien, of the past, one is apt to endorse this. My theme is not, however, to estimate the comparative merits of captains then and now, but to write about the personality of the leaders of the leading counties to-day.



C. McGAHEY.

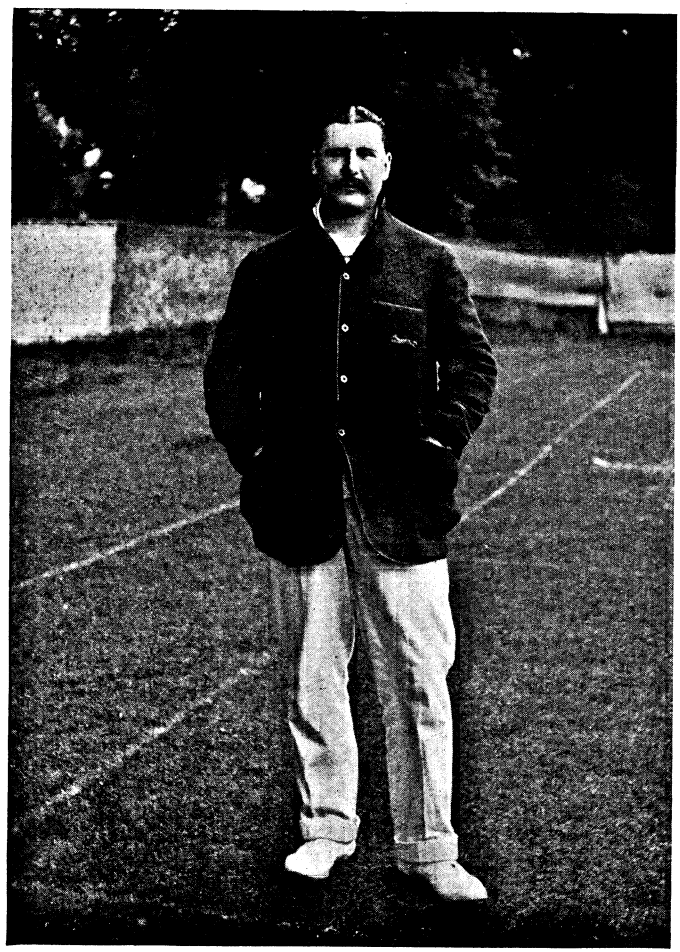
Nevertheless, Imperial enthusiasm insists that firstly the England captain shall be dealt with. When Lord Hawke told me that Mr. A. C. MacLaren was appointed the national leader for the Test Matches, he observed to me: "That is quite right; he is the captain of captains." How heartily I endorsed that as I watched the first Test Match at Birmingham! In all my experience of big cricket I have never witnessed such masterly manipulation of any side in the field as Mr. MacLaren then exhibited. The way in which he tried to place Blythe so that balls were not likely to come to his bowling hand, the manner in which he modified positions, not only between overs, but between balls, and the success of his own inspiration in going what was virtually long-stop to Hirst's bowling, were things never to be forgotten by close students of the game. It is true that the English catching was marvellously fine, but it was the captaincy of Mr. MacLaren which vitalised it. Nor was it a bad tactical move to send in first the two candidates for spectacles. Waiting to extricate yourself from such a predicament is always nervous work. It is now a matter of history that the pair knocked off the runs without being separated.

The Australians think Mr. MacLaren the finest batsman we have produced, and say that not to have seen him at Sydney is never to know how he can bat. However, to praise him in that department is to paint the lily. When he first came out, he won a



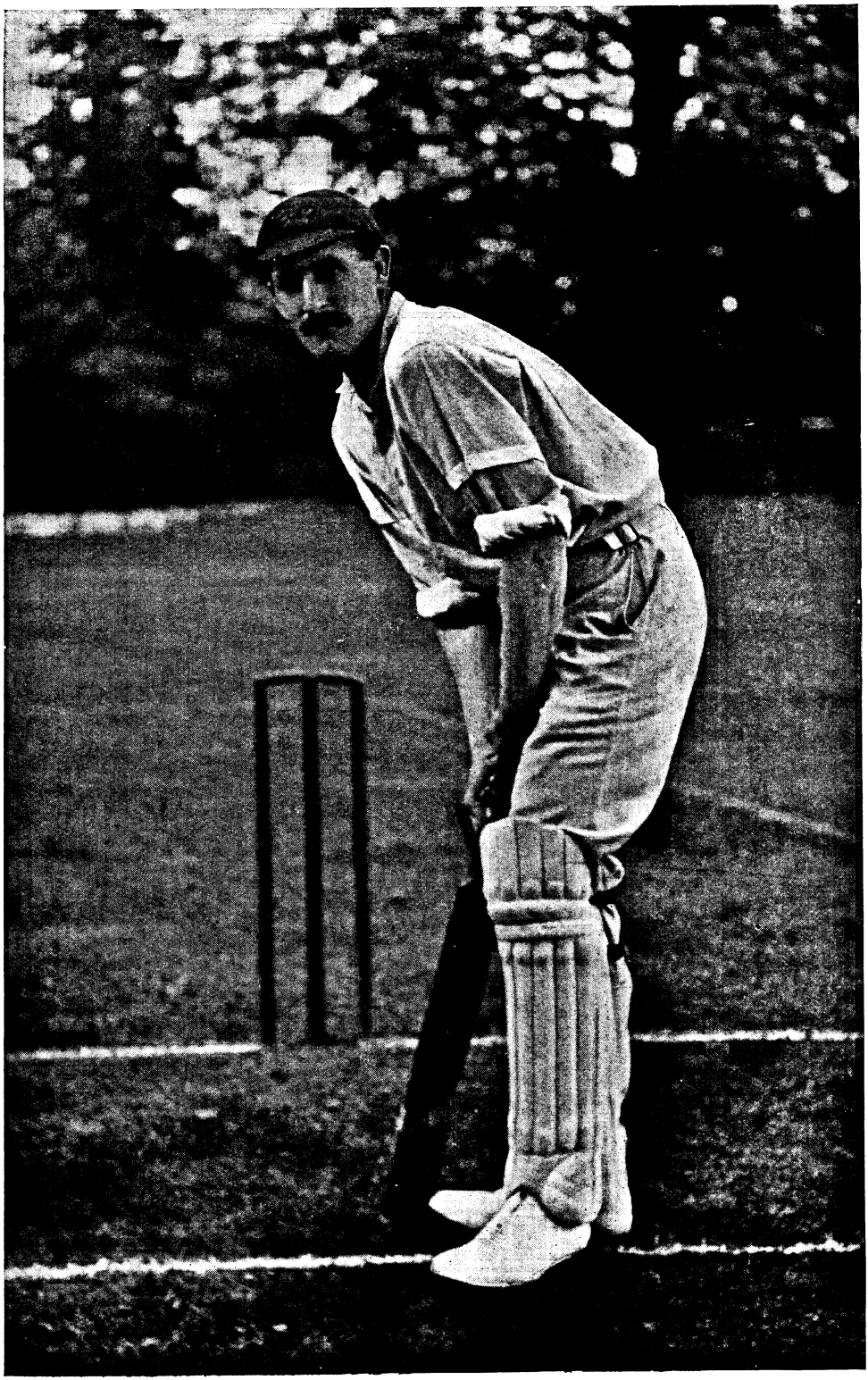
LORD HAWKE.

reputation as great as that of Denton or Tyldesley for fielding in the country. On becoming captain, and also owing to attacks of rheumatism, he showed that at slip he has never had any superior save poor George Lohmann. As captain he knows the game with an intimate thoroughness combined with an alert vigilance that few have ever equalled. Moreover, he will take risks to win; too many captains seem content with a draw. I am not sure that he has always captained county teams with the same magnetic power he has shown on big occasions. That is because he is temperamental, and on the field has sometimes looked as if he were bored. But whilst there is a chance of winning a game, and when there is something to put him on his mettle, he is great. It is no secret that a draw was regarded as inevitable at Birmingham. However, Mr. MacLaren came out to win, and he won by a margin of three hours as well as of ten wickets. The rather apathetic local crowd, supported by knowledgeable contingents from Nottingham and Worcester, gave him a thoroughly deserved ovation after the conclusion. It is a great feather in the Harrovian cap that the School on the Hill should have provided two such English captains as F. Stanley Jackson and A. C. MacLaren.



SIR ARTHUR HAZLERIGG.

Of present-day county captains, Lord Hawke naturally comes foremost. Not only is he the captain of the champion county, but he has done more for cricket than any other man of any generation. To

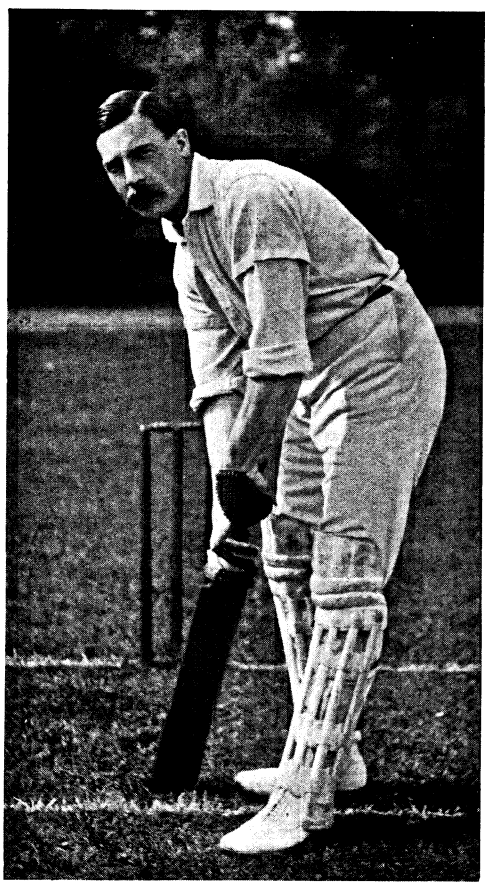


A. H. HORNBY.

all intents and purposes he is the uncrowned king of the game, and the very individuals who most cavil at the supremacy he exerts are the foremost to acknowledge him when they confront him. Lord Hawke's great influence is one of morality and of enthusiasm. He always does what he believes to be right and what will best serve the highest interests of sport. It is the knowledge that no selfish and no petty motive can ever affect this typical Englishman that gives him his enormous influence over the world of cricket.

I confess that I am at some disadvantage in writing of Lord Hawke, because my knowledge of him, whilst it has only increased my admiration, renders it difficult not to say too much. It is not easy to look dispassionately at the friend one believes wields so powerful a sway for good in the game one loves so well. I have seen him knit his brows over problems which the public never knew were submitted to him, I have seen him bear the burden of possible obloquy whilst steering imperial cricket into the most honourable channel, but never have I heard one self-conscious or one selfish consideration pass his lips. One personal matter I may be permitted to touch on. Some six years ago I perpetrated a voluminous book entirely composed of cricket statistics. Lord Hawke ushered it to the public in a preface which contained a fine survey of the whole of the game. From it I may quote a characteristic passage :—

"I have had the pleasure of being captain of as fine, as honourable and as manly a set of cricketers as could be found in any walk of life. They have played the game in the truest spirit."



A. E. LAWTON.

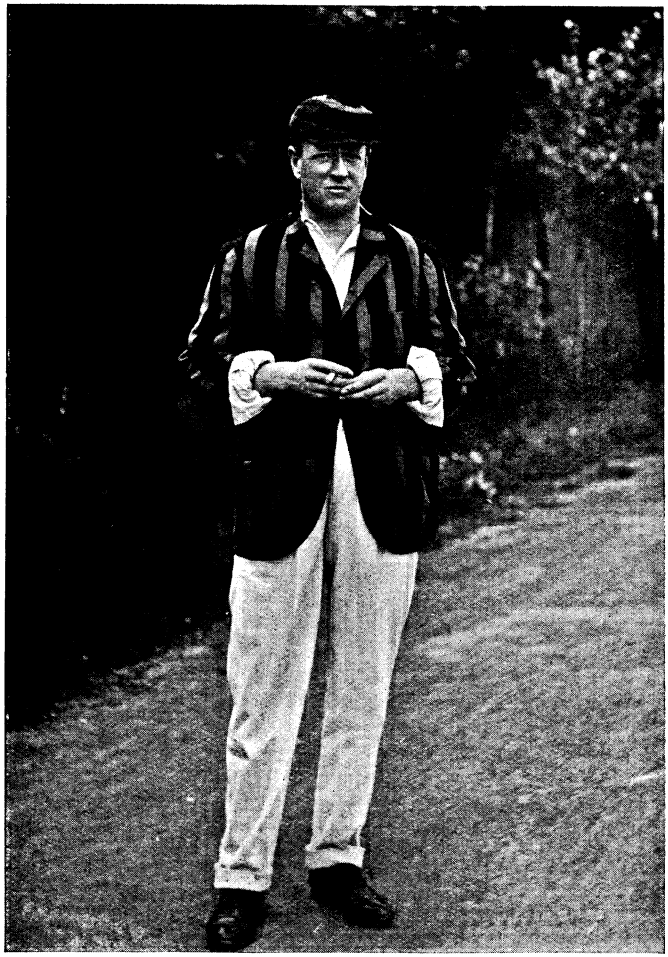
It is Lord Hawke who has fostered that spirit in Yorkshire. To all practical intent he is friend as well as captain of his team. Not only has he enormously improved the *status* of the professional, but he introduced the mark system, with fine results. Never does he let his men slacken in the field. Once, at a cricket dinner, he observed that his "Buck up, boys!" was the phrase that never failed to spur them. Unlike some county captains, he does not lose sight of his "pros" when off the field. He corresponds with them, advises them, knows their affairs and their families, while the happiest day of his year is the one on which he entertains his side at his place Wighill Park, an annual function which is a red-letter festival for all concerned.

As a captain he goes on developing. Unlike Mr. MacLaren or Mr. F. S. Jackson, he was not an inspired leader from the outset—for instance, did not extract the same last iota of merit out of the bowling of Preston and Wade as he so cleverly does from the change attack of Myers to-day. His quickness in seeing the weakness in an opponent's batting is now extraordinary, and also his coolness in not allowing the general enthusiasm for a new Yorkshire "capable" to affect his own judgment. His aphorism: "It takes three years in county cricket to make a county cricketer," is one of those wise things that executives perpetually changing the composition of their elevens would do well to ponder over.

Outside my subject, but a point I must allude to, is the high standard he has always expected from the cricketers in his many teams in many climes, not only on the field, but off. Everywhere Lord Hawke's



H. D. G. LEVESON-GOWER.



H. K. FOSTER.

men have shown what Englishmen should be. It used to be declared that he always went round at eleven o'clock to see that all his side were in bed, and as he wanted to win matches he does not deny the soft impeachment. He himself, an honoured veteran, is a fine example of *mens sana in corpore sano*, for moderation has kept him vigorous, and his kindly sympathy makes him the confidential friend of lads young enough to be his sons.

I have always felt an especially warm interest in the cricket of Mr. H. K. Foster, because I can lay claim to have been the first to forecast it in print. Before he had won his place in the Malvern eleven, by chance one summer it befell me to watch the pleasant cricket of the Malvern L.V.C., and I wrote: "There are two young Fosters here who ought to become famous; W. L. is the sounder, but H. K. is the more brilliant, his wrist play is wonderful." Sitting on the balcony of the now demolished billiard-room at Lord's, when H. K. was making that dazzling 121 in the University match of 1895, I was reminded of this, and even to-day I hardly think the general public shows quite enough enthusiasm for his breezy batting.

There is a certain leisureliness about the Worcestershire captain. He is none too fond of responsibility, but as captain he has made his men play a spirited game such as Kent showed in their big year. With a side of only average calibre this must entail a certain amount of defeats, which less sporting captains might resolve into tame draws. But Mr. Foster feels with Mr. Sammy Woods, who said: "My lad, in Somersetshire we either win matches or lose them," which is fifty times more cricketing than the tame draws of Essex and Warwickshire. Mr. Foster is



PELHAM F. WARNER.

in the employ of Mr. Foley, who is the Mæcenas of Worcestershire, and he does not trouble much about any cricket except that of his county. He is an exceedingly good judge of the game, who can coach in terse sentences, but he has never yet had a county wicket-keeper who kept his hands sufficiently low. Unlike most county captains, he is to-day a better bat than he ever was.

Sir Arthur Hazlerigg differs from all other county cricketers because he only plays as captain. When Mr. C. E. de Trafford resigned his long and kindly handling of Leicestershire, there was absolutely no one in the county ranks who could be considered eligible as leader. So with the most sporting self-sacrifice Sir Arthur Hazlerigg undertook the task. Beyond enthusiasm, he said himself he had no claims to be a cricketer, and under the strange circumstances he has comported himself extremely well. Having his men well in hand, he has led them with intelligence. He has made friends everywhere, and his tactful modesty is widely appreciated. Without pretending to be a bat, he obstinately defies any bowling, and if he does not get many runs, he is "not out" with persistent frequence. This is one of "the squires of England" who can "do what they are called on." Certainly at Eton or Cambridge he would have laughed had some palmist foretold he would be a county captain; but he has done his level best, and probably has small suspicion how widely his efforts are appreciated.

To follow Mr. Marsham as captain of Kent would be difficult even for an archangel, so admirably did that capital sportsman fill the post. How Mr. E. W. Dillon will succeed is one of the curiosities of the season. At Rugby he was so fine a bat that he began to command almost before he learnt to obey. At Oxford he was a capable run-getter in the period when men began talking about the decline in enthusiasm of University cricket—a decline happily arrested, for both Light and Dark Blues last year played in the keenest fashion. Captaincy is, however, a thing quite apart from skill at the game. It is a matter of temperament and tact. There have before now been Hotspurs who made Henrys. To lead Kent needs only a silken rein; no other leader has such a bed of roses.

One noticeable fact is that out of the eleven county captains here dealt with, four were at Oxford and five at Cambridge, but two of the latter were not in the eleven. One, of course, is Sir Arthur Hazlerigg, the other is Mr. A. H. Hornby, who never was in either the Harrow or the Cambridge eleven. What a wonderful captain Mr. Hornby's father was! I remember the famous "Monkey," always bareheaded, always fidgeting both in the field and at the wicket. How that man could steal runs! Nobody ever bustled opponents as he did. He used to give Barlow a sovereign every time he ran him out; but if there had been two Hornbys at the wicket simultaneously, I verily believe almost a blocked ball would have been sprinted. I recall two observations of his to me; one on cricket was: "More runs are lost by not running than are ever made," an opinion that can be commended to some modern public-school elevens in which I have lately seen some shocking stay-in-your-ground over-caution and bad judgment.

The other remark was political: it was at the height of the Gladstonian Home Rule controversy, and Mr. Hornby was a thick-and-thin Tory. Said he—

"I never knew but one Radical who was a gentleman, and he was a crossing-sweeper."

Five minutes after he added—

"I went too far, but you know what I mean," and no good sportsman could misunderstand what he wished to imply from his point of view. He was quite short, but terrifically strong. At the time of the row over the umpire's decision at Sydney, when the crowd mobbed Lord Harris, Mr. Hornby took up a rough who was damaging the pitch and carried him right off the ground.

Mr. Lawton as a captain always recalls to me the elder Hornby, because he would himself do all the work of the side if this were possible. There is little craft or subtlety about his energetic leading. It is as characteristic as his lively batting. No one can afford to trifle with either, but Machiavellian machinations are not to his taste, though he gives nothing away. He has only recently resumed authority in the Peak county, after an interregnum caused by an unfortunate incident. Some years before, he was bowling in a county match when some members of the committee sent him out a note bidding him take himself off. He at once resigned and proceeded in less important cricket to "'it 'ard and hoften!" May his return revive the languishing fortunes of Derbyshire!

Mr. E. M. Sprot is a captain to whom my heart warms, so thoroughly does he play the game in the most sporting spirit. He used to be in the South Lancashire Regiment, and he plays county cricket just as he used to play company cricket. Would that more

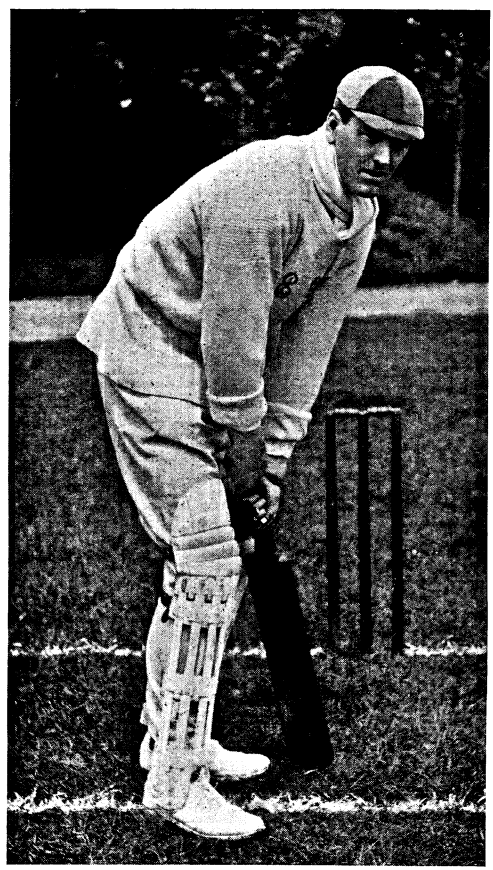


E. M. SPROT.

entered on it in the same mood! Two of his achievements last year were the best things of the whole season. Against Northamptonshire he declared the Hampshire innings when his side were in a minority of 24, and when set 85 to win, he himself made 62 not out in considerably less than an hour, hitting two sixes and eight fours. He also had the satisfaction of making 91 in helping his county to beat Kent at Canterbury by one wicket. How hard he hits is shown by seven fours in his 30 against Gloucestershire. As a captain he is not immaculate. When a change bowler gets a wicket, he does not think it cricket to take him off at once, so the new batsman often gets set against inferior attack. But this is an error coming from fine feeling. He is agile in the field, and expects everybody else to be the same. Belonging to the "do or die" type which has made cricket what it is, he is supremely unconscious what a good fellow and what a good sportsman he is. If everybody played county cricket with his enthusiasm, you would never feel there could be any question about the popularity of the game.

Mr. H. D. G. Leveson-Gower is the pupil of Lord Hawke, the Timothy to this cricketing Paul. Not that he lacks abundant individuality of his own; only he has modelled his methods as captain on those of his elder. Like Lord Hawke, Mr. Leveson-Gower takes the keenest interest in the professionals. "The Shrimp" is the cricketing Peter Pan, he has never grown up. What he was in the Winchester eleven and in the Oxford eleven he is still to-day in his thirty-sixth year. He has the same

engaging, boyish manner. Nothing can daunt his enthusiasm; the longest day's leather-hunting leaves him smiling when the rest are jaded; as captain nothing disturbs him, and the true story of his cricket career is marked by more forgiveness than it would have been in the power of most men to bring themselves to grant. He thought he would have been captain of Surrey on the retirement of Mr. Key, and he only assumed that position among a new generation of cricketers on the retirement of Lord Dalmeny. Meanwhile he had been wirepuller and adviser not only for his own county, but for both Universities, and in most climes where the game is played. No other cricketer of to-day has coached so many others or is such a promptly accurate judge of individual skill. With his consummate knowledge he would be worth playing for England, simply because of his ability as captain, and if he only had the temerity to insist on playing something like a regular side, he might soon lead Surrey back to championship. No suggestion of weakness ever characterised his leadership in the field; too much consideration for other people's views hampers his leadership off the sward.



E. W. DILLON.

If I were to call Mr. Leveson-Gower a good bat and a great captain, I should describe his lifelong friend Mr. Warner as a grand bat and a good captain. As a bat at Lord's, Mr. Warner has never had a superior, not even "W. G." Nothing more painstakingly meritorious can be imagined, and the way in which the little man commandingly plays the deadly Yorkshire attack, for instance, is among the modern marvels of cricket. Not for one moment would I seem to detract from the ability as a captain of the man who brought back the ashes and led the most successful touring teams we have ever sent out. Far from it. I should call Mr. Warner a good captain, uncommonly theoretical, but not always able to transfer thought to action with sufficient celerity. His demerit is that, when captain, he seems to leave the game and the field too much to itself. Not that he is not invariably vigilant, only that he does not sufficiently seem himself to hold the control. Super-sensitive himself, he may not always care to apply the spur or the curb to others.

My personal recollection of him goes back to his very first appearance for Rugby at Lord's, when I put him into a hansom and sent him off to that friend of every cricketer, Dr. Warton Hood, so badly was he injured. I should say hardly any cricketer has more love of the game than he who is now Middlesex captain officially, after having filled the position as deputy for Mr. Gregor MacGregor all last summer.

He has had many ovations. Two must remain conspicuous—one when he rose to return thanks at the dinner given by the M.C.C. to their victorious team, and the other, his reception by the natives of Trinidad when he went back to play cricket in the island of his birth. The old nigger who rushed out to him, shouting: "I taught you cricket, sah! I bowled to you when you were a child!" no doubt still takes credit for having coached the batsman who of all his generation is the most associated with Lord's.

His successor in leading an M.C.C. team in Australia, Mr. A. O. Jones, gives the impression of being a captain who leads with particular effectiveness a side which has the upper hand. It is impossible to exaggerate



GILBERT L. JESSOP.

BATTING.

	Completed Innings.	Runs.	Average.
P. F. Warner (Middlesex, *b.* 1873, *ed.* Rugby and Oxford)	477	17,797	37·46
H. K. Foster (Worcestershire, *b.* 1873, *ed.* Malvern and Oxford)	369	13,359	36·20
A. C. MacLaren (England, *b.* 1871, *ed.* Harrow)	510	17,180	33·68
C. McGahey (Essex, *b.* 1871)	495	16,602	33·51
G. L. Jessop (Gloucestershire, *b.* 1874, *ed.* Cambridge)	604	19,897	32·94
A. O. Jones (Notts, *b.* 1873, *ed.* Bedford Modern and Cambridge)	566	18,163	32·09
E. M. Sprot (Hants, *b.* 1872)	274	8,648	30·90
E. W. Dillon (Kent. *b.* 1881, *ed.* Rugby and Oxford)	213	6,433	30·20
A. E. Lawton (Derbyshire, *b.* 1879)	259	6,551	24·90
H. D. G. Leveson-Gower (Surrey, *b.* 1873, *ed.* Winchester and Cambridge)	221	5,509	24·92
A. H. Hornby (Lancashire, *b.* 1877, *ed.* Harrow and Cambridge)	204	4,849	23·76
Lord Hawke (Yorkshire, *b.* 1860, *ed.* Eton and Cambridge)	745	15,731	21·11
Sir Arthur Hazlerigg, Bart. (Leicestershire, *b.* 1878, *ed.* Eton and Cambridge)	41	403	9·82

his personal enthusiasm, and no one could suggest any weakness about one who has been referee in international "footer," and he must have full recognition for the wonderful season Notts enjoyed in 1907. As a spirited bat he ripened slowly, but found sufficient opportunity to achieve his ultimate success, thanks to the unwavering confidence expressed in him by his master, the late Arthur Shrewsbury.

Of course, Mr. Gilbert Jessop is the ideal of the crowd—"the Croucher" who has made the impossible perfectly practicable, so far as astounding batting goes. It would need a whole article to attempt to do justice to that theme. On the other hand, less than justice seems to me to have been done to his capacity as captain. The way in which, year after year, he takes a team of constantly changing cricketers into the field for Gloucestershire (whilst he must be counting the weeks till August brings him reasonable support), and gets reasonably good cricket out of his recruits, is a recurrent phenomenon in the game. He has to make half the runs on the side, often he must wish he could take half the opposing wickets—but his bowling is fitful—and he not only fields like a cat, but gets alertness out of the side he leads in May. Only a man of his dogged temperament could do it. He vouchsafes little praise, is laconic and attentive; watches, watches, watches—his eyes are never off the game, and he puts everything he knows into the most hopeless match. As captain of the Western county he exhibits the very qualities that enrich his batting. Oddly enough, the Australians were disposed to think we overrated his run-getting powers till he gave that astounding display at the Oval. After that, Hugh Trumble observed: "I don't ever remember any other bat making me scratch my head so much." It is the famous Yorkshire bowling off which he scores most vigorously; quite a remarkable percentage of his finest exhibitions, too, have been reserved for metropolitan grounds.

In conclusion, here are the life averages of these county captains, which have never been set out before. I have extracted them from the manuscript volumes of statistics it is my hobby to compile.

After studying the second table, no one can complain that the county captains show overmuch desire to put themselves on to bowl.

BOWLING.

	Runs.	Wickets.	Average.
G. L. Jessop	17,461	659	26·52
C. McGahey	6,869	239	28·74
H. K. Foster	349	11	31·72
A. O. Jones	8,792	276	31·84
A. E. Lawton	2,984	92	32·42
E. M. Sprot	1,821	55	33·10
E. W. Dillon	1,834	49	37·42
H. D. G. Leveson-Gower	872	20	43·60
P. F. Warner	306	7	43·71
A. C. MacLaren	165	1	165·00



"THE FIRST LESSON." BY G. SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

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TIM.

By H. C. O'NEILL.

HOW could one small boy turn the rope so that she could skip without using her hand? That shows you don't know anything about it. You just fasten the rope to St. Thomas's railings, and then turn the other end. The handle of the stable door over the way will also do; but it's not so good as the railings. But turning is not the whole of skipping in Pyle Street. You must sing the song; and, as it is an affair of importance, sing it with earnestness.

Raspberry tart,
Gooseberry tart,
Tell me the name of my sweetheart.

Tim rendered this well, the first two lines coming out with a wistful reminiscence of what had taken place in a past which now seemed so remote. But the majesty, the mystery, the pathos of the chant lay in the last line. Tim conjured the spirit to unveil its hidden face for many fair maidens, but not with such a personal interest as for her. She in Tim's eyes was the belle of Pyle Street, elfin, witch, angel—all in one. There were other belles in other eyes. These did not matter. They were "the others." In his world were two presences, hers bright and noble, and his—the small taper that burnt before her, in worship of her many excellences.

The truth? Why tell the truth? But even this most unbribeable mentor robbed her of little. For mean streets have their sunshine. Nan was, surely, the sunshine of Pyle Street, her bright, small face, with its blue eyes, being crowned by an unruly mass of golden curls. Now, as the sun was sending his last grateful beams into this desolate corner of the world, they fell on the small head, and it was simply riotous running, liquid gold.

She skipped with dignity, for she had seen eight summers, and the tremendous issues at stake, this moment, did not go unfelt by her.

Raspberry tart,
Gooseberry tart

—the luscious mouthfuls passed away—

Tell me the name of my sweetheart.

The spirit was summoned. "A, B, C," called Tim, as she skipped in her dignified fashion. Let's hope the fairies don't send her "D." No, the letter is passed. One breathes again.

"E." It might be worse than Eddie Jones. There is a fascination about the Law, and Eddie's father is a policeman. No, it is not to be the Law. Tim's prayers rose fast, for "T" was a long way off. Who knew what might happen before then? "E" crosses out two, for is there not Ernie, also?

Still the small feet went rhythmically on. Nan put variations into the steps. You skip with the left foot, and bring the right down with a kind of double touch. This is, of course, the manner of the adept only.

"J, K, L." There was a new hopefulness as she passed the letters. But *she* looked serenely on, and gave herself up to the Fates to do with as they would. Did she pass "L"? Then she is not to grace military circles on "Lance's" arm. He with his cane under his left arm, she on the right, the "Scotch" cap deftly tilted on one side over the hair pressed down with scented oil. *Not* the Army. Ah, well!

"N, O, P." Peter is out of it, too. Well that cuts both ways. There is the charm of uncertainty about Peter's ultimate vocation in life—of course, he *might* be anything.

Who would think, looking at this street, that such great issues were at stake? The small, fair child, her head raised on high, her arms resting on the waist of her torn petticoat, and the bare feet keeping time, and the voice of the influences issuing from the throat of an eager waif, who, with shirt and a pair of knickers held up by one brace, braves the elements and ministers to the history of Pyle Street.

Heavens! She's at "S." We pull ourselves together. There's lightning in the air. Let's pause just a little and—give her a chance. Will she? Wantonly, carelessly, fatefully she has passed *it*. The life dies out of Tim's voice. Well, he didn't *quite* hope it. No, it was only a cold in his eyes.

But stop! She can't go on like this.

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"'Raspberry tart, gooseberry tart'—the luscious mouthfuls passed away—'Tell me the name of my sweetheart.'"

"X, Y." There was only another, and Tim could not think, for the life of him, of anyone who boasted a name beginning with "Z." Neither could she. There was the tragedy and charm of it. But she had passed "Z." This required thought. *She* thought they should start again from "A." *He* felt this to be hardly befitting the solemnity of the occasion. They must summon the fairies all over again. There was something in that. So again,

Raspberry tart,
Gooseberry tart,

—Again the sweetness of reflection. And once more earnestly—

Tell me the name of my sweetheart.

New life rang in Tim's voice. Hope commenced his journey of surprises and pains once more.

There was not a trace of anxiety or hurry in Nan's steps. Reflectively they fell out, keeping pace with the spirit of the moment. The sun had almost gone. It was almost too dark to be playing by the railings just below the dark passage bordered, on one side, by the wall of the churchyard.

A woman's voice was heard: "Tim, Tim!" No, he didn't hear anything. The letters were passing away.

"G, H, I" were safely left behind. Still the unhurried steps kept time with the eager and earnest voice.

"M, N, O" fell away into oblivion.

"Q, R, S." A sound was heard, perhaps, as of a light footfall. A sudden scream, and Nan fell in a heap as a bicycle dashed round the corner. Tim had rushed forward, but the rider's foot suddenly touched the ground and knocked him aside. A crowd soon gathered and Nan was carried off. Who thought of Tim? None but an angry woman who cuffed him on the head for not coming when she called, and for getting into mischief.

Tim managed to escape into the street later and sat on the edge of the kerb, in the dark. She was just at "T," too! And now? A drunken passer-by aimed a savage kick

at Tim for being in his way, and poured out a crowd of curses on the offender. The kick didn't matter; but to break the silence in that way! The night closed in.

* * * * *

Tim reached Nan's door next morning in time to see the ambulance carry off the broken sunshine that lit his life. The ambulance went slowly and Tim followed. It was a long way, to be sure, but at length they stopped at the hospital, and he saw her carried in. The doors closed her in, him out.

Tim's mother never knew how he lived in those days. At night he crept into his crib, and disappeared in the morning. The policeman on the hospital beat drove away, twenty times a day, a small, ill-clad boy who seemed to be gazing through the hospital windows.

One afternoon, nearly a week after the accident, Tim, from the opposite pavement, saw unwonted signs of life about the hospital. Men and women—mostly women—came up in twos and threes and took their station outside the large double doors. One or two of the bolder seemed to be turning the handle. This called for investigation. Tim crossed and was soon closed in by a dense crowd which grew every minute. At length both doors were opened and, willy nilly, Tim was borne into the hall. There some ordering took place under the commanding eye of a man in uniform. A hurried inspection revealed that it was *not* the natural enemy of small boys, and Tim breathed a sigh of relief.

But what was happening? The crowd seemed to be melting rapidly. Men and women disappeared, some down passages, some up flights of steps. Then Tim was left



"The gracious offer that she might choose one for her very own, played havoc with her dignity."

alone—alone with the dragon in buttons. The latter asked not unkindly of the small, wistful figure: "Well, what ward?"—"Ward?" This was a crisis. A sudden inspiration came to him, and he whispered "Nan."

The porter, ignorant fellow, did not seem to know Nan. He dealt only in wards. But, stay, Tim had not been here before. "When did Nan come?" At last, after many steps and long passages, Tim was delivered over to a magnificent lady in blue with a white apron and white head-dress. His guide gave her the countersign, "S 67," and, with a swift look that went straight through him, she led Tim across a ward filled with many beds, from one of which he caught sight of a small, white face peering forth from a golden aureole.

Nan at first gleefully, then, with a remembrance of her queenly sway, in a dignified manner, smiled on Tim, and they fell to talking. There was all the glamour of a new life to describe, with suitable emphasis laid on the doctor's name for her, his "little fairwy."

The wound in her head was healing under the nourishing food and good nursing. Tim wished to go back to *the* day, but found Nan difficult. At length the bewildering spectacle of six marbles, including one white, streaked with red, and one glass with many colours running through it, combined with the gracious offer that she might choose one for her very own, played havoc with her dignity.

The glass one was very fascinating. Yes, she was nearly at "T." But that red streak on the white! Which to take? She thought that she felt—that the fairies might—almost, perhaps have stopped her at "T."

Here a nurse came, and the marbles were gathered back to the mysterious pocket, minus two—the glass one, and the white and red. And Tim found himself on the step once more, with the door closed.

The sun was shining. The streets were bright. It seemed like summer. Was it "must" or "might" stop at T? The troublesome question, viewed with a comfortable hope, and the memory of the wonderful afternoon with Nan all to himself, made a heaven of delights, and Tim walked home and crept into his small bed, agreeing with Browning: "All's right with the world."

A NATION'S ORISON.

LORD God of our Imperial race,
Whose banner floats on every breeze,
Thou didst ordain our dwelling-place
From Britain to the utmost seas.

And by Thy strong, directing hand,
Didst guide our fathers' feet of yore,
To plant their name in every land,
And spread their speech from shore to shore.

We pray Thee for Thy Presence still,
To make us prompt at Duty's call,
Our Empire's mission to fulfill,
For Thee, Who gave and givest all.

Ennerve our hearts as in Thy sight,
The poor, the weak, the wronged to bless,
And stand before the world upright,
A nation working righteousness.

Arouse the spirit of our race,
Impart fresh impulse to our blood,
Give courage, wisdom, strength, and grace
To realise our Nationhood.

GEORGE DAVIDSON DEEPING.

BY ORDER OF THE SQUIRE.

By NORMAN INNES,

Author of "My Lady's Kiss," "The Surge of War," "The Lonely Guard," etc.



QUIRE SPARKETT was a small, spare man of military appearance. His hair was white, his moustache iron-grey, his nose hooked, his eyes blue, and his face very red. His gait was forceful rather than dignified, the short, quick steps, and the nervous play of the ash-plant he carried in his hand, told of an active temperament, also of a hasty temper. He slashed at a nettle by the roadside—a nettle was an abomination to the squire—missed it, and hit his ankle. At that moment he spied George Horspool's cheerful face staring above the privet hedge that he was trimming.

"Why don't you shave yourself, Horspool?" demanded the Squire in tones of remonstrance. "It's a disgrace, a positive disgrace to the village. And you say that you have been in the Army, too."

"An' so I 'ave, and was a-shaved o' Sunday, 'deed I was. But it be nice growing weather, sir; grass is just a-coming thick in Cowley Bottom."

"But that's nothing to the point!" snapped the other fiercely. "Shaved on Sunday, man! Why, I had my eye on you and Edward Bolter all Sunday morning. Never have I seen two men—men who say they were soldiers—in church in such a condition."

"But the barber-chap never come till the arternoon, indeed 'e didn't; and Bolter and me was in the Army, as you know, sir, and 'ave got medals to prove it."

Squire Sparkett sniffed contempt. In view of the man's present unshaven condition, the idea of his ever having deserved well of his country appeared a gross improbability. He cut irritably at a thistle with his cane, and glared at a large black cat—the pride of Mrs. Horspool's existence—that was sunning itself on the brick pathway.

"I'll tell you what I'll do for you," said the autocrat of the village at length, "I'll tell you what I'll do. My gardener——"

"Mr. Joseph Clegg."

"Joseph Clegg, my gardener, I say," repeated the Squire at the presumptuous interruption, "can do most things—at least, if I wish him to. On Sunday morning next, at nine precisely, he'll shave you, and Bolter, Gollup, and as many more of you who do not possess razors, or have not the skill or decency to use them. He shall shave as many as come to the Hall, and we'll put an end to this outrageous scandal."

George Horspool stared in blank dismay at the amazing offer.

"I—I, sir," stammered he in confusion, his bucolic brain a-rack to frame some adequate excuse for refusal of the Squire's generosity.

"Not a word, Horspool, not a word," said the other affably. "Just let it be known in the village that my gardener will be in the stable-yard at nine on Sunday for the purpose. I'll speak to Clegg and let Gollup, Casey, and that poaching rascal Wools, whose hair is never cut from one year's end to another, know my wishes. Ah, there's Mrs. Gollup! I want a word with her."

And the Squire set off briskly in the direction of a portly dame who was standing at the garden gate of a small cottage beneath the shadow of the inn. For a moment the woman hesitated at the wicket, then, clutching the strings of her sunbonnet, she made off up the road towards the shop ere Sparkett was within fifty yards of her door.

"Mrs. Gollup!" cried the pursuer, "hi! Mrs. Gollup! Will no one stop that woman? You there, stop her, I say!" (this to an idler upon the bench before the inn). "Hi! Constable, stop her!" shouted he to P.C. Churn, who, scenting mischief, had suddenly found duty calling him in the opposite direction. The man of law turned ponderously in the direction of the querulous outcry; the officer was a large man, of a deliberate mind, who hated fuss or impatience.

"Good morning, sir," said the constable,

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saluting. "A heavy list, they tells me, for quarter sessions."

But the Squire was not to be diverted from the chase by the red herring drawn across the trail.

"A moment, Churn, and I'll have a word with you. Hi, hi, Mrs. Gollup! Ah, she's gone into the shop!"

And in the shop he found his quarry wedged between a side of bacon and a butter-tub, uneasily surveying a sheaf of tallow-candles hanging above the counter.

Mr. Lock, the proprietor, came hurrying out of his back room as Squire Sparkett came hurrying into the shop. Lock was used to the women of the village being run to earth on his premises, and reckoned that the fact brought him no little custom.

"Now, Mrs. Gollup," panted her pursuer, "what is it that can have brought you down here within an hour of dinner-time? Good morning, Lock."

The woman curtsied to the side of bacon, squinting at the candles the while.

"Good morning, sir," said she innocently.

"And a much better morning it would be if that great hulking husband of yours would shave himself, and not disgrace Northborne by loafing about with a three days' beard on his chin."

The woman brightened.

"Yes, sir, 'twas only yesterday that I says to Gollup: 'Why wasn't you a-shaved o' Sunday afternoon?'"

"Sunday afternoon, my good woman? Sunday *morning* is the time to shave. Now listen, Mrs. Gollup. I expect your husband in my stable-yard at nine next Sunday morning. Joseph Clegg will shave him."

"Lawk-a-mercy, Squire! Joe Clegg?" gasped the lady.

"My gardener will shave your husband, by my orders, in my stable-yard, at my expense, on Sunday morning next, at nine precisely. Do you understand?" demanded her persecutor irascibly.

"Ye-es, sir," she answered meekly, clutching at the butter-tub for support.

"Very well, then. Lock, will you send a seven-pound tin of soft soap up to the Hall? There will be two or three to be shaved on Sunday, and Thomas Wools will have his hair trimmed. Ah, there goes Fair. I must have a word with him. Good morning, Lock."

Out of the shop sprang the Squire like Jack-out-of-the-box.

"Hi, Fair!" cried he, waving his stick, "your beasts——"

But the farmer, with eyes bent upon the road before him, gave his nag a cut and bowled away, thanking his stars for a narrow escape, and leaving behind him a cloud of dust for the lord of the village to choke in.

The Squire found his gardener earthing up a bed of celery. He caught sight of his bowed form at a distance and at once began issuing instructions for the approaching Sabbath.

"Hi, Clegg!" shouted he, "I have given orders to some of the men—Wools, Gollup, Bolter and others—to come to the stable-yard next Sunday morning to be shaved and made presentable."

"Yessir," answered the ex-sailor with nautical imperturbability; he was used to the Squire's vagaries.

"You can shave, Clegg?"

"Yessir—leastwise, I can shave myself."

"Then if you can shave yourself, it naturally follows that you can shave anyone else I wish you to."

"Yessir," replied Clegg, convinced by the Squire's manner of his own capabilities.

"You have razors?"

"Beg pardon, sir, but I sent 'em into Alchester last night to be set; and the man——"

"Very well, then, Clegg. I will buy razors. This village must be decent, even if I have to pay for it. You can cut hair?"

For a moment the seaman looked doubtful.

"You can mow the lawn," continued his master irritably—"trim a hedge. I have seen you use the horse-clippers myself. So you'll just cut Tom Wools' hair when you shave the others; his shock is an offence. The appearance of the villagers is becoming a scandal in the county," observed the Squire, turning on his heel.

Gloom reigned in the taproom of the "Plough and Bottle" on Saturday night, gloom that degenerated into panic when about nine o'clock Mr. Clegg dropped in for his evening glass. The company eyed him askance and fidgeted nervously.

The seaman drank the King's health in rum and water of his own paying-for, and mentioning the fact that he had just come back from Alchester, where he had expended three shillings on the Squire's behalf in the purchase of three Army razors, hinted that his glass might be refilled at the cost of his prospective clients.

As a rule, the *habitués* of the "Plough and Bottle" were proof against such hints, but on this occasion the expediency of acceding to his demands was apparent to all.

"And I bought a brush, gentlemen," said Clegg, smacking his lips, "as stiff and workmanlike a brush as could be 'ad for seven and a 'arf. Three and sevenpence 'apenny 'as this ere business cost the Squire, not to speak o' my time and the soap. 'Ere's 'is 'ealth, I say."

The toast was drunk, but with little enthusiasm; in fact, the consumption of ale that Saturday night was below the average. George Borrell, the landlord, noted the fact, and the furtive eagerness with which, an hour before closing time, his guests slunk off one by one, after each had proffered a black bottle to be filled with gin or rum.

By 8.55 a.m. upon the following morning the preparations of Mr. Joseph Clegg were complete. Beneath an acacia that shaded one corner of the stable-yard was set a Windsor chair. On a milking-stool there steamed a bucket of boiling water, a tin of soap stood handy, and from a hook in the wall hung a strop, much hacked and the worse for wear.

"That your strop, Joe?" observed Wilkes, the groom, who had assisted in the preparations. The gardener nodded.

"Seems you can do summat with a razor, Joe. Strike me lucky if I'ld be shaved by you!"

About 9.15 the victims entered the yard in a straggling band. A hearty "Good morning!" from the operator was answered by sickly grins.

"Come on, one of you gentlemen," said Clegg with naval politeness, as he ran a shining Army razor over the thick of his hand.

But still the men hung back; the preparations looked businesslike enough, but the barber's attitude was unpromising.

"Now, 'oo's the first to take the hedge hoff the squire's best?" cried Wilkes, who had settled himself upon an empty pail, an interested spectator.

The witticism acted as a hint. Josiah Gollup shuffled forward and seated himself with a groan.

"Just gives us a sup from your bottle, Wools," he moaned thickly; "mine's been dry this hour since."

But Wools shook his head, and at the same moment Joe Clegg, hitching a towel about the victim's neck, began slapping the viscous lather upon the stubby jowl in a manner that would have done credit to a plasterer.

The luckless Gollup squirmed beneath the operator's heavy hand.

"Your brush be mortal hard, Joe," he gasped, as the lather spurted into his nose and eyes.

"Cheer hup, Jos!" cried Wilkes; "there's worse to come."

"Hold your noise, Wilkes, will yer?" growled Clegg, as he surveyed the rubicund nose and watery eyes that protruded from the lather.

Clegg's hand was true, his nerve steel, but unfortunately the weapon he wielded was neither. The third upward sweep opened a gash in Gollup's chin. A muttered exclamation escaped the partly-shaved, and a sympathising groan broke from the shivering onlookers.

"'Ow does the razor suit you, sir?" cried the groom in true barber fashion.

"'Old your row, will yer, Wilkes?" said the barber, setting his teeth. It would have been well could he have set the razor in his hand.

"And you, Gollup, you 'old still, can't yer?" added he, as half an inch of skin yielded to the blade. "'Ow can I shave you chaps if you sits and twists like a eel?"

A howl broke from the wretched Gollup as the gardener attacked his chin with vigour.

"If yer don't 'old still, yer'll get cut," observed Clegg in tones of warning.

"Yer'll cut 'is blooming 'ead off, yer mean, Joe," observed Wilkes in ecstasies.

"I'll punch yours!" replied the gardener with heat.

"Go and get Jos Gollup a drop o' brandy instead o' laughing there," remonstrated Tom Wools. "'E'll bleed to death if 'e don't have a drop o' summat."

"Right yer are, gents," assented the groom, rising; "and a yard or two of stickin'-plaster to 'old his face together while 'e drinks it."

When Wilkes returned with a bottle of brandy three parts full, and a roll of plaster, Josiah Gollup was bathing his injured physiognomy beneath the pump, and George Horspool had staggered to the fatal chair.

The second victim fared no better than the first, but Clegg might rasp and gash as he liked, George Horspool was in such a condition that he neither cared nor remonstrated. The many pulls he had taken at the black bottle during the martyrdom of his predecessor had won oblivion for his craven spirit.

"Now, Wools," said Wilkes, applying a patch of plaster to Horspool's crimson face, "your turn now. Squire's razor's not wore



'"Sunday afternoon, my good woman? Sunday *morning* is the time to shave.'"

out. It'll want a tougher 'ide nor yourn to take the hedge hoff, just you see if it don't."

"Now, Wools," said the operator, fiercely stropping the heavy blade, "come on now; your 'air's to be cut, and we 'ave got to get to church."

"Ho! 'is 'air's to be cut, his hit?" cried the groom, surveying the poacher critically. "Just a leetle hoff the top, sir, and, mind the bald patches. Don't spile 'is beauty, Joe."

The gardener ignored the interruption.

"Now, Mr. Wools," he pleaded, "yer knows master's orders. I was to trim you up along o' the others."

"Not if I knows it. Trim yourself, Joe," replied the other doggedly, glancing at the mangled remains of his neighbour Horspool, who was blankly surveying the scene from a puddle beside the pump.

"'Ave a drink first, Tom Wools," urged the gardener, pointing to the brandy bottle that Wilkes had just withdrawn from the latest victim's lips, and persuasively stropping a razor upon the palm of his hand.

"No, no, Joe," persisted Wools; "try your hand on Casey here."

Now, Mr. Michael Casey, though filled with no yearning to make trial on the gardener's skill, possessed a soul that was athirst for brandy.

Grimly he gripped the bottle, raised it to his lips, when a howl rang through the stable-yard. Casey squinted over the tilted bottle.

Wilkes and Wools were staring at the amateur barber, who was stamping round the operating-chair wringing his left hand.

"'E's cut 'isself! I knowed as 'ow 'e'ld do it!" groaned Josiah Gollup.

"Give 'im air," shouted the intoxicated Horspool from behind the pump.

"Get me some stickin'-plaster, will yer, Fred Wilkes, and not stand grinning there. Must I bleed to death while you landlubbers stretch your jaws?"

"Get on wi' yer shavin', Joe Clegg—there's yer master a-lookin' at yer!" cried the irrepressible Horspool.

It was a fact. In the doorway stood Squire Sparkett, prepared to read the Lessons in church that morning. Immaculately groomed, in a grey frock-coat, gloved, and with a flower in his buttonhole, he was surveying the scene. His gardener, Clegg the paragon, seated in the Windsor chair, was swearing audibly. His groom, supporting himself with both hands upon the edge of the pail, was convulsed with unseemly mirth. And of those upon whom he would have conferred the blessing of cleanliness that bright Sabbath morn, one was ragged of hair and scrubby of chin as ever, another was patched and gashed almost beyond recognition, while the other two were unmistakably intoxicated.

"A ver' goo' sha', Squi'!" blurted Horspool, turning his injured but rubicund face towards the Squire; "a ver' goo' sha'."

"Faith, oi'll be shaved again next Sunday, Squoire!" cried Casey.

"Silence!" roared the Squire, taking in the state of affairs at a glance. "Wilkes, turn those scoundrels out of my yard. Clegg, go indoor to my housekeeper; and Wools, if your hair is not cut by the barber this very afternoon, the very next time I catch you in the brook coverts disturbing my game, I promise you the shortest and cheapest clip you have ever had in your life."

BY THE SEA.

LAST night a hand on my window tapped,
A voice came out of the sea,
"Awake, awake, thou dreamer, wake,
And open thy door to me!"

What music this that so long was still,
What hand that I thought was cold?
"Come in, sweet ghost, from thy lonely bed,
For my longing hands to hold."

I freed my door from the bolt and bar,
And the slow tears came to me,
For I heard no sound, save the tapping rain
And the moan of the rising sea.

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER.

THE COUSIN FROM CANADA.

By ROBERT BARR.

THE Earl of Dunfor sat in a deep, leathern chair in that huge apartment which was comfortable rather than luxurious — the smoking-room of the Cadenabian Club. He had slipped forward until his neck rested on the back of the armchair; his hat was negligently tipped over his nose, so that an observer could not be sure whether he was asleep or awake; his legs were stretched out to their fullest extent, and looked unnecessarily long; his hands were thrust deep in his trousers pockets—so deep that they seemed to be reaching for unattainable knees. The whole tense yet slouch attitude of his youthful lordship might have appeared to an onlooker the result of being awake during the small hours of the night before, while another might have said that Dunfor had been looking upon the wine when it was red, or, more probably, when it sparkled in the goblet.

As a matter of fact, this negligent posture indicated a deep and withering despair over a situation from which there was but one way out, so far as Cassalis, seventeenth Earl of Dunfor, could discover. He must marry the girl, and it was useless to flinch from the inevitable. Even Cassalis's cold-hearted solicitor admitted the drastic nature of the action, he, having seen the woman, describing her as a middle-aged female who, even in her youth, could not have been beautiful, and on whose appearance the hardening influence of pioneer life had left an extremely unprepossessing result.

Cassalis had suggested that some compromise might be arrived at.

"Tell her," cried the young man, suddenly becoming as bold as a lion—"tell her that we'll fight!"

The grave legal gentleman slowly shook his head.

"We haven't a leg to stand upon," he said.

"Of course," agreed the young man, "we haven't a leg to stand upon, and she has two, therefore she can beat us if it comes to a knock-out. Still, I don't propose that we shall let it come to that. Can't we bluff her? Here is an unsophisticated creature from the wilds of Canada—she cannot be up to snuff, don't you know—and if we seemed fierce and uncompromising, just yearning for a struggle, don't you think she might propose a settlement? If she made me an allowance of only five thousand a year, I could rub along on that."

Again the lawyer shook his head.

"Your suggestion of a simple-minded peasant from the wilds of Canada is quite beside the mark, my lord. Miss Jane Braddock strikes me as a woman of the shrewdest common-sense."

Cassalis groaned.

"She knows exactly what her rights are under the will of the late Earl, and I am quite sure that nothing is to be expected from her generosity. When I ventured to point out to her the grievous position in which you found yourself, she said rather curtly that it served you right. She added that if you had accepted your uncle's advice of ten years ago—going to Canada, as he counselled, and endeavouring to carve out a career for yourself—you would not now be reduced to the humiliating quest, as she put it, of searching for an heiress."

"Oh, she knows I have been on the outlook, then?"

"Yes. I rather suspect that she has been in England much longer than she cares to have it appear. I think she has been living in the neighbourhood of the Dunfor estates, learning everything and forming her own opinions. Indeed, besides inheriting what for the last five years we have all thought was your own property, she seems to have inherited something of the hard, practical disposition of your uncle, the late Earl of Dunfor—a disposition which, I suppose, he himself acquired during his early years as a pioneer in that country. It is extraordinary, but Miss Jane Braddock appears actually to believe that for a young man, life in Canada is infinitely superior to life in England.

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I thought at first this was merely affectation on her part, but I have come to the conclusion that she is quite sincere in her illusion."

Again his lordship sighed deeply, and said, in a tone of plaintive despair—

"I suppose, then, there is nothing for me to do but marry this dreadful person?"

The solicitor coughed slightly and discreetly behind his open palm.

"I quite agree with you, my lord," he said. "But if I may venture a word of caution, I should advise you to approach Miss Braddock quite as you would a lady of your own class, for there seems to be an odd stratum of independence in her nature which puts it quite on the cards that she may refuse you."

"How old do you say she is?" asked his lordship.

"I think she must be nearing forty."

"Well, as I am thirty-four myself, the discrepancy of age need not trouble us. You regard her as rather a hard-favoured individual?"

"She is businesslike, but scarcely beautiful," was the noncommittal reply of the lawyer.

"Well, anyhow, I'll make the plunge," said his lordship, with something like a groan.

This conversation had taken place in the town house of the Earl of Dunfor. His legal representative had lunched with him, discussing the situation as well as the viands. When the solicitor had taken his departure, the young Earl set out on his quest of the Golden Fleece; but his courage being somewhat in need of bracing up, his course deflected to the club, where tonics are dispensed in the smoke-room, and so we find him ruminating on his hard luck, with a large empty glass and a half-consumed syphon of soda on the table at his elbow, to which more power, say all sympathetic persons.

Cassalis, seventeenth Earl of Dunfor, was indeed to be pitied. Others in years past enjoyed the fun, and now he was called upon to pay for it. The Earls of Dunfor had been, for the most part, a betting and drinking lot, and in spite of all that the earlier members of the family did to preserve intact the estates by means of a rigid entail, the legal difficulties were gotten over by their descendants so effectively that the fourteenth Earl, who lived a short but vividly expensive existence, had succeeded in disencumbering himself of the last vestige of property which remained to the Dunfors, and nothing descended to his successor but the title.

His successor possessed three brothers, the eldest of whom emigrated to Canada some time before the fifteenth Earl's death; and shortly after that event, the two younger brothers followed the example of their senior, leaving the eldest brother to enjoy the title and whatever pickings his legal representative could squeeze out from the remnant of what had once been a fine property.

The fifteenth Earl died without children, and it was thought for a time that the father of young Cassalis would inherit, he belonging to a distant branch of the Dunfor family; but the only son of the eldest of the three Canadian brothers proved his right to the title, and came over, a millionaire, to enjoy it. Mineral lands were the making of the elder emigrant. His only son had quietly, through agents, purchased the Dunfor estates before putting forward his claim to the title. The estates, therefore, he could leave to whom he pleased—a fact that he rather gruffly impressed upon George Cassalis, the presumptive seventeenth Earl, for the sixteenth Earl was a bachelor. He urged the young man, who was then twenty-four and just out of college, to visit Canada, look about him, and accept one of the many opportunities that country afforded to youth and energy; but Cassalis said that London amply supplied all his frugal needs, and he chose to remain in the metropolis. A small patrimony of not quite five hundred a year had been left to George Cassalis, and, with an earldom in prospect, there seemed to him little doubt that, being a good-looking fellow, he might secure a satisfactory heiress. But five years elapsed without this desirable event taking place. There were too many certainties in the market, so far as noblemen were concerned, for heiresses of value to invest good money on what was merely a prospect. By the time Cassalis was verging upon thirty, the sixteenth Earl died unexpectedly, and on his will being read, it was found that his extensive property and fortune were left to the eldest representative of his father's two younger brothers, whoever he or she might be, for the noble Earl had not taken the trouble to look up his Canadian relatives during his lifetime. These relatives were advertised for, but not discovered, and Cassalis became seventeenth Earl of Dunfor and heir to the estates as well, should this Canadian claimant not put in an appearance.

After three or four years Cassalis looked upon himself as safe, and, with the help of

moneylenders, acted accordingly. He even, upon application to the courts, had his claim to the estates partially acknowledged by an order which, after due lapse of time, would become permanent. But now, in the fifth year since the reading of the will, there calmly entered upon the scene the missing heiress, and the Earl found himself deeply in debt, possessing an empty title and a small income, while confronted with the necessity of accounting for every penny that the estates had produced during the five years.

Muttering something that sounded profane, the young man drew in his long legs, removed his hands from the depths of his pockets, adjusted his hat properly on his head, raised his glass, but, finding it empty, placed it on the table again, walked out of the club, hailed a hansom, and drove to Grosvenor Square, to make what was, after all, his first proposal of marriage to a hard-featured woman of forty.

Notwithstanding his promise to the lawyer, he evidently did not intend to waste much time on sentiment, for he retained the hansom.

Miss Braddock seemed bent on doing things in style. The house in Grosvenor Square proved to be an expensive one, and a dignified man-in-waiting opened the door for his lordship and recognised him.

"I am sorry, my lord," said the man, "but Miss Braddock is not at home. She went out about twenty minutes ago, and said she would return within the hour, and as she always does exactly what she says, perhaps your lordship will wait."

The Earl of Dunfor heaved a gentle sigh of relief on learning of the lady's absence; but, after all, though a crisis may be postponed, it must ultimately be met, and so, with another sigh, which was not one of relief, his lordship said he would wait. Possessing, after all, some of the slight common sense of his race, he thought it best to get the ordeal over, and as soon as possible learn his fate one way or another.

He expected to be shown into an empty room, but the servant, throwing open the door, announced, in an impressive voice—

"The Earl of Dunfor!"

A refined-looking, beautiful girl, who might be anywhere from twenty to twenty-four years of age, rose to greet him from a table where she had been writing. There was a little air of eagerness in her manner and a welcoming smile on her pretty lips as she held out her hand to him.

"How do you do, sir?" she said, in a charming voice, with something, Cassalis suspected, of the American accent in it. "I have often heard of you, and am very glad to make your acquaintance. I suppose you have come to see Miss Braddock?"

His lordship stammered that such had been his intention, then trailed off into compliment, which he was too embarrassed to make effective, intimating haltingly that the presence in which he found himself more than compensated for the absence, and so forth and so forth. When he came to a halt, the girl laughed in a most friendly manner, while her clear, dancing eyes seemed to find something very amusing in the young man's abashed attitude.

"Oh, dear, no!" she said. "My presence could never atone for the absence of one who is such good company as Miss Jane Braddock. I am quite sure you will be delighted when you meet her."

His lordship murmured that he was sure he would.

"She is such a straightforward person," continued the girl, after requesting his lordship to be seated, sitting down herself on the corner of the sofa. "For several years I have been her secretary, and probably know her better than anyone else, and no one admires her more than I do, although I hope that you will come to the same opinion."

"That is very good of you, Miss—Miss—Miss——"

"My name is Hilda Winterbourn," explained the girl, "and Miss Braddock is a distant relative of mine. I call her my aunt, but she is not an aunt in reality. We are both just revelling in our first visit to England."

"Ah, you are from Canada, too?" suggested Cassalis.

"Oh, yes," replied Hilda, "I am a Canadian, as Miss Braddock is. We have both read so much of England—about its history and its associations and its grand record of literary achievement. I am an ardent admirer of the heroes and heroines it has sent out to India and to the furthest corners of the earth, as, indeed, my own ancestors came, to meet difficulties and to baffle them, to overcome obstacles, to conquer and to prosper, each doing something for the furtherance of the great Empire to which he or she belongs. I often think of my own grandmother—for, after all, it is hardest on the women—who died broken-hearted in exile—broken-hearted that there was no prospect of her ever seeing her own land again. But though they may die, they



"'What would you advise me to do?'"

never flinch. Thus, finally, their descendants and the Empire reap the reward of their devotion. I think, Lord Dunfor, you must be proud to belong to such a race, doing your duty here in the heart of the Empire, as they have done theirs on the outskirts, to uphold its great traditions."

The girl's eyes glowed with the enthusiasm of the sentiments she uttered. His lordship, with downcast eyes, fumbled with his hat. His face slowly turned a dull, red-brick colour.

"We—we do what we can," he said, in a voice that was scarcely audible, remembering that his duty had been done in the clubs, in the gambling-rooms, and on the racecourses, with some foreign relaxation thrown in.

The girl sprang suddenly to her feet, with a little laugh that had nevertheless the suggestion of a sob in it.

"You must excuse me, Lord Dunfor," she said. "I am merely trying to explain to you how deeply Miss Braddock and I feel what you might call the sentimental side of Empire. I think that we at the remote four corners cherish all this more deeply than perhaps you do here at the centre, for I have not yet met anyone on this side of the Atlantic who seems as enthusiastic on the subject as I. They all take it in such a matter-of-fact, undemonstrative sort of way. Why, I believe I'm embarrassing you at this moment with my fervour!"

"Indeed, you are not, Miss Winterbourn,"

replied his lordship, speaking without restraint for the first time since his entrance into the room. "I am delighted to have heard what you said, and I am sorry if you think our people over here unresponsive. I shouldn't wonder if our school system has something to do with it. We are taught to repress ourselves, and anything approaching enthusiasm is frowned upon. Now, in the Canadian schools, perhaps that is not the case."

"Indeed it is not!" cried Hilda. "We fly the British flag from every schoolhouse, and I read with amazement the other day that here in London, on some occasion or other, you were afraid to hoist your flag, in case it would offend somebody. The children of Canada are wildly patriotic, and in that they resemble the young people in the United States rather than those of this country. But here I am chattering to you as if you were one of my oldest friends, instead of being a complete stranger who has come to see someone else."

"Well, I hope," said his lordship, "it will not be long before you come to regard me as one of your oldest friends, and if that happens, I shall like it very much. I think you are a girl who has a great many friends."

This was a longish speech for the reticent nobleman to make, and Hilda looked up at him approvingly. It occurred to her that, under proper training, this young man might ultimately become a conversationalist. At first he had seemed quite boyishly shy, which amazed her, for in most of the books she had read, and in many of the plays she had seen, a titled young man was rather apt to be the villain—a bold-speaking, evil-staring sort of person whom it was well to avoid. Cassalis, seventeenth Earl of Dunfor, was the first member of the aristocracy she had met, and in her capacity of secretary she consequently heard a good deal about this person whom the heiress was to dispossess.

Ordinarily, her sympathy would have gone out towards him; but Dunfor was accounted a fool, who had so thoroughly played ducks and drakes with his opportunities, that she came to regard him with something like contempt. This contempt was augmented by the fact that the Earl's legal representative had actually proposed to Miss Braddock that she should make the young man a handsome allowance with which to keep up the dignity of the title. As this suggestion must have been made with the consent, if not the connivance, of Dunfor himself, Miss Winterbourn found her contempt growing into scorn. All the young men she knew in Western Canada were eager enough for money, but they would have disdained taking it from a woman, especially when they made no sort of return for value received.

Hilda, who knew the Earl's age—that information coming with other particulars pertaining to the transfer of the estates—had pictured his lordship as a rather broken-down, leering, oldish-looking man, already wrinkled, with pasty face and the hair getting thin on the top of his head. She expected to see a person to whom the term "well-preserved" could be applied, and was therefore amazed to meet a fresh-looking, young fellow, who gave little evidence of having attained his majority. He even blushed like a schoolgirl and stammered like a schoolboy, while the patrician ease of manner which she had looked forward to, was non-existent in his case, for any farm-lad of her acquaintance would have seemed Chesterfieldian compared with him. She found herself readjusting her ideas concerning the nobleman, and the readjustment was not at all to his disadvantage.

"Yes," she answered at last. He had grown visibly uneasy during the long pause. "Yes, I am so fortunate as to possess many friends; but I suppose my list would look meagre compared with that of a London man like yourself."

"Well," said his lordship, "if you were talking of acquaintances, a London man certainly possesses a great many; but speaking of friends, do you know, I don't believe I've got a friend in the world."

She leaned forward eagerly.

"Then *that's* the reason of it," she said breathlessly.

"The reason of what?" asked Cassalis.

"Your playing ducks and drakes."

The young man at first seemed inclined to resent this remark; then he laughed quite genially, and she joined him, saying—

"I am afraid that was a very rude remark of mine."

"Oh, not at all, and it contains the merit of truthfulness. I have played ducks and drakes with a fortune which it now turns out is not my own."

"Ah! And have you come to beg clemency from the owner?"

Cassalis suddenly remembered the real object of his visit, which, since he entered that room, had been entirely forgotten; and, to his amazement, he found that the project which earlier in the day appeared, to say the least, distasteful, was now actually abhorrent.

"My legal adviser," he explained, "thought

I should call upon Miss Braddock and talk over the situation with her. You see, after all, we are by way of being relatives."

"So you are. But doesn't it occur to you that, having allowed all these years to pass without any effort on your part to make the acquaintance of Miss Braddock, it is rather late in the day to pretend an interest in her now?"

"Miss Winterbourn, I think you are inclined to be a little unfair. I come to visit Miss Braddock because she is living in Grosvenor Square, and all I have to do is to jump into a hansom—— Oh, by Jove!" his lordship interrupted himself, "I told the hansom to wait, and am paying two-and-six an hour for it! I suppose that's what you'd call playing ducks and drakes."

"Yes," said the girl quietly, touching the bell. And when the servant appeared, "Pay Lord Dunfor's cabman," she said, "and dismiss him." Then turning to Cassalis with a smile, she added: "You must economise, you know, for I warn you that any appeal to Miss Braddock will be in vain. She cares nothing about the title or its support, and has become rather prejudiced against your lordship—the ducks and drakes, you know."

"Ah! Is she more prejudiced against me than you are?"

"I'm not prejudiced against you."

"You were."

The girl laughed.

"You think, then, that your personal appearance is so much better than your reputation that it has won me over?"

"Oh, I know I'm not much on personal appearance, but, then, hang it all, the devil's never quite so black as he is painted, and I shouldn't like you to think I'm done in jet! I fancy both you and Miss Braddock see only one side of the case. You must remember that even so stubborn a thing as a fact has two or three sides. For instance, you spoke just now about the laggard fashion in which I sought out Miss Braddock, but you quite ignore the fact that for five years I have been advertising everywhere for her, or, at least, for the invisible legatee who has since materialised into Miss Braddock. Dash it all, Miss Winterbourn, do be reasonably fair! What more could I have done? Not till this morning did I know Miss Braddock's address, when my solicitor gave it to me, and you must admit I haven't lost any time in availing myself of the information."

Hilda Winterbourn was sitting on the end of the sofa, with her elbows on her knees and her chin in her hands.

"Why, Lord Dunfor, you can talk like a streak when you get started!"

"Like a what?" asked his lordship.

"It's a phrase we use out West—like a streak. I suppose it means a streak of lightning, but I don't know. Now, why did you not go to Canada when your uncle asked you to do so? It would have made a man of you."

"Oh, thanks, Miss Winterbourn!" He stiffened perceptibly in his chair.

"You mustn't get offended at anything I say. I am merely a secretary, you know, and it's my duty to say what I think without fear or favour—at least, that is the condition on which Miss Braddock has engaged me. If she found me hedging, evading facts, or trying to be unnecessarily polite, she wouldn't stand it."

"I am rather sorry you dismissed that cab, Miss Winterbourn."

"Regrets are useless, Lord Dunfor. You couldn't escape in a hansom, because we could overtake you in our motor. Miss Braddock has become an expert chauffeur since we have been in England, and often drives the car herself, although she keeps an excellent man for that purpose. I hope I have convinced you that you cannot get away without our permission. However, do not be frightened. My intentions are laudable, although I sometimes express myself clumsily. What I should have said was that if you had taken your uncle's advice ten years ago, and gone to Canada, you might have become a more practical man than you are now. Can you, for instance, do anything useful?"

"Yes. Like Miss Braddock, I can drive a motor-car."

"Then is it your intention to become a chauffeur when you have transferred the Dunfor estates to Miss Braddock?"

"I confess I haven't given much thought to the matter."

"Haven't given much thought when you are on the verge of—— Oh, dear, you do seem to be a hopeless, helpless sort of person!"

"What would you advise me to do, Miss Winterbourn?"

"I'm not your secretary, Lord Dunfor; I am secretary to Miss Braddock. She has first claim to all my advice."

"I had somehow come to fancy you a friend."

"You say that very nicely, Lord Dunfor. Well, then, as a friend, I will ask you one question. Do you possess a private income?"



"'Do you know, Aunt Jane, I don't think she has.'"

"A mere triviality—less than five hundred a year."

"Pounds?"

"Pounds, of course."

"Why, that's two thousand five hundred dollars! With an annual amount like that, you could, if you possess any business capacity at all, make a fortune in Canada."

"I doubt the business capacity, Miss Winterbourn."

"I don't see why you should doubt that; your uncles showed great business capacity. Why should you be bereft of all good sense? It's merely the enervating life you've been living over here, and the false notions you have imbibed regarding money. Does it never occur to you that a well-equipped man should experience the same exultation in making money of his own rather than inheriting it, or marrying for it, that a thoroughbred horse feels in winning a race."

"Now that you put it that way, Miss Winterbourn—— By the way, are *you* going back to Canada?"

"Yes, after I have seen a little more of England."

"Why, I'd like the privilege of showing some portions of England to you, Miss Winterbourn, and then, when you go back, I think I'll have a shy at Canada."

"When I go back? Why, what has that to do with your visit?"

"Well, I should like it if there was someone in the great Dominion whom I knew, and whose good wishes I might hope for."

"But you have my good wishes now. You are not at all the sort of person I thought you were."

"Does Miss Braddock share your prejudices against me?"

"Oh, Miss Braddock! Don't flatter yourself you can win her over as you have a simpleton like myself. Still, I'll say a good word for you to her; but if you take my advice as well as my good wishes, you will forget Miss Braddock and turn your attention to Canada instead. Perhaps you didn't know that Miss Braddock was a teacher of elocution, and she is quite formidable when she begins declaiming. You'll never know what a cumberer of the earth you are until you hear Miss Braddock expatiate on the uselessness of man, especially the degenerate scions of old families. But I do hope Miss Braddock will allow me to stay in the room when she's talking to you."

"You again bring up regrets for the hansom cab, and fears about the motor-car."

Miss Winterbourn hid her face in her hands, laughing and laughing until the young man, thinking he was the object of her merriment, grew uneasy and again began to redden.

"Are you making merry at my expense, Miss Winterbourn?" he asked at last.

It was a few moments before the girl could speak.

"Not at you exactly," she said at last, "but at the situation. Miss Braddock has gone out to walk in the Park by herself, so that she may prepare eloquence for your reception."

"For my reception? Why, she didn't know I was coming here to-day!"

"Yes, she did; but you were not expected till about five o'clock. I said you'd probably wait till after dinner, for I imagine a Society man in London knows he looks well in evening clothes."

"Miss Winterbourn, there must be some mistake. No one knew I was coming to Grosvenor Square except myself—that is," stammered the hopelessly truthful young man, "no one—except—except——" And here he halted, but the girl finished the sentence for him.

"Except your lawyer—your legal adviser, I think you called him."

"Yes, my solicitor."

"Ah, solicitor! That's the word. Well, why didn't you send him to solicit for you, as John Alden did for Captain Miles Standish. It's a solicitor's business to solicit, isn't it?"

"Really, Miss Winterbourn, I don't know what you're talking about. I have not the honour of the acquaintance of the Captain you refer to, nor do I know Mr.—Mr. What's-his-name Alden."

"But don't you know that your solicitor and Miss Braddock's solicitor have put their legal heads together in conference, quite agreeing, in that absurd English way of theirs, that the impoverished nobleman is to marry the wild, untamed heiress from the West?"

"Good Heavens!" cried the startled Earl of Dunfor. "You mean to say that these two solicitors have dared——"

"Well, our solicitor dared, and you ought to have seen the way my dear friend, Miss Jane Braddock, carried on! Why, you'd think, to hear her talk, that no rich American woman had ever married a poor but proud English lord since the world began; but I can tell you that Miss Braddock has risen to the occasion. When you fling yourself upon your knees—I know Miss Braddock will let

me stop if I can get your permission—you'll then learn for the first time the capability of the English language. I really am sorry for you, now that I see you aren't half bad, as you say over here, so let me ring for another hansom, and meanwhile I myself will sing your praises to the angry woman."

"Well, that's very good of you, Miss Winterbourn, and you may begin the song by stating that I have not the slightest intention of marrying Miss Braddock, even if she owned the mines of Golconda as well as the estates of Dunfor."

"Do you mean to pretend that you did not come here to-day to propose to her?"

"Now, I say," hedged his lordship, "you know you're just chaffing me, and also you are quite well aware that I came to pay a friendly and not a declamatory call upon Aunt Jane, who is by way of being a relative of mine, seemingly as objectionable as my uncle, the late Earl. No, Miss Winterbourn, I'm going over to Canada. You wouldn't mind if I went on the same steamer that carried you?"

"Mind? I should be delighted, of course; but I am going by way of Quebec and Montreal."

The girl had risen to her feet, as if to dismiss him.

"That would suit me down to the ground," said his lordship. "I went over to New York once in August. Beastly place and beastly hot! I'd like to go by Montreal this time."

He held out his hand to her. She took it, smiling at him, and somehow he didn't seem to know when to let go; but to equalise that situation, she showed no heedless impatience in withdrawing her hand, and thus the catastrophe fell upon them.

The door burst open as if impelled by some explosive, and there entered a tall, gaunt, mannish woman, with a grim, hard, domineering face framed in iron-grey hair. She turned in cold fury to the obsequious footman.

"Did not I command you to tell the Earl of Dunfor I was not at home if he called, and you knew I went away solely because I wished this announcement to be the truth and not a lie?"

"Yes, madam; I told his lordship so."

"It is all my fault, Aunt Jane," cried Hilda. "You know I wished to see Lord Dunfor, so I gave orders he was to be shown in here, for it was also the truth that I was at home."

"Oh, I knew how it would be, Hilda!" cried the angry woman. "I told you that you yourself would spoil the plan. Here this profligate spends an hour in your company, and I find you standing there holding each other's hands!"

The young lady withdrew her hand with promptitude.

"I knew what this scapegrace would do. With all the detective force in London at his disposal, how long would it take him to find out that you were the heiress, and not I? Haven't you read those Sherlock Holmes books? Nothing can be concealed from a London rake in this shameful city. Oh, Hilda, Hilda, we were getting on so nicely," cried Miss Braddock, "and now you have spoiled it all!"

His lordship made a stammering attempt to speak, but, failing, reached forward and again took the girl's hand, which she, with a smile, did not withhold.

"Do you know, Aunt Jane," murmured his lordship, clinging to the hand, "I don't think she has."

A FANCY.

LITTLE sheep upon the hillside, I have watched you every day
Running up and down together like the baby clouds at play.
Mother says the cosy blankets under which I go to sleep
Are a present for a good girl from a lot of little sheep;
And she says you are not really striped with pink and striped with blue,
But the stripes are on my blankets, so I'm sure they grow on you.

ARCHIBALD SULLIVAN.

A COUNTRY HOLIDAY.

By DOROTHEA BARRETT.

"WELL, you and Mackenzie can do as you like," announces Theodora decidedly; "*I* stay here."

"I can be happy here," says Leonora looking critically round: "what about *you*, Mackenzie?"

Mackenzie, who has flung himself down under the table, with his tail outside for coolness, gives a short, sharp shriek.

"There," says Euphemia reproachfully, "you've trodden on his tail again."

"Well, I can't help it," says Theodora peevishly. "It's his own fault; he shouldn't leave it about like that." She returns, however, remorsefully, to the place where Mackenzie is moodily licking the sore spot on his tail, and, hugging him, says tenderly but irritably: "You know it's your own fault, Mackenzie darling. You *have* got such a long tail, and you *are* so careless with it."

"Shouldn't have such big, clumsy feet, should she, Macky?" says Euphemia.

"Will he stay in a beautiful farmhouse, and have a lovely garden all to himself, eh? Shall we stay, Mackenzie?"

Mackenzie barks and thumps the floor twice with his tail, signifying "Yes." It is cool and shady under the table, and he remembers that it was hot and dusty coming along behind the carriage, and that he ran the last part of the way with his tongue hanging out.

So it is settled, and they stay.

For two whole days they — Euphemia, Leonora, Theodora, and Mackenzie, the dog —have been hunting the neighbourhood for rooms in which to spend a peaceful summer month. On and on they have driven, with Mackenzie padding softly in the dust behind the carriage.

They have been directed and misdirected to houses many of which are impossible. Those which look attractive let no rooms at all. For instance, they are kindly assured by the woman at the corner of the lane, by the clover field, that for certain they will get exactly what they require at Mrs. George Barnard's over the moor. Arrived at the farm, they see an old man, with his back to them, milking cows. They pick their way between cows, pigs, and ducks, and after they have shouted many times to him, he turns at last, and Theodora asks him, with her best smile—

"Is this Mrs. George Barnard's farm?"

"Yes," he says, "it is."

"She lets room, does she not?"

"No, she don't."

"Are you *sure?*" asks Leonora blankly.

"*Quite sure*," emphatically. "*I* am Mr. George Barnard, and there ain't no room-letting here."

"But we were told Mrs. George Barnard did let rooms."

"Well, you was told wrong," says Mr. George Barnard grimly. "She don't." And returns to his cows.

"Can't understand it," says Theodora disgustedly, climbing wearily back into the carriage again. "That woman at the corner distinctly said she did."

"Her idea of a joke, I should think," says Euphemia in a depressed voice.

They have hired a carriage from the inn where they have been staying, and their kindly old driver takes a paternal interest in getting them happily settled. "P'raps she does let 'em, Missy," he now volunteers, "and p'raps he thinks he won't get his comforts so well if she do; thinks she won't 'ave time to 'tend to '*im*."

"Well," says Euphemia, "we must get in somewhere. Shall I ask this old man as we pass? Do you think he will have heard of any?"

"*I* shouldn't," answers Theodora gloomily: "he looks to me as if he had never heard of anything in his life."

"Wot say?" says the old man stupidly, on being asked.

"Do you know if there are any rooms to let at the Nook Farm?"

"Noa."

"Do you know if they let rooms there?"

"Noa."

"Do you know where the Nook Farm is?"

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"Still watching them, smiling all the time."

"Noa, I don't."

"Do you know of *any* farm *anywhere*, or any rooms?" asks Theodora rather sharply.

"Noa, I don't."

"Oh, *come* on," mutters Leonora under her breath, and they drive on, leaving the old man staring amiably after them; Theodora, looking back at the turn of the road, sees him still watching them, smiling all the time.

"Thinks he's been a success, evidently," she says. "I expect he'll go home and tell his folk all about it: 'Three young women they wus, asks me they did, if I knowed if they let rooms at the Nook Farm. "No," I says, "I don't," just like that I says it. Did I know where the Nook Farm was, they says. "No, I don't," I says. Did I know of any rooms anywhere, they says, just like that they says it, as free as free. Freer young

women you never see. "Noa, I don't," I says. Looking for lodgings they wus, you may depend, 'cos one of 'em says to me, she says, "Do you know of any rooms anywhere?" she says—ah, lodgings they wus lookin' for, *you* may depend.'"

When at last the weary party comes in sight of Old Yard Farm, Leonora gives a cry of delight.

"Oh, *look*, Euphemia!" she says. "Isn't it *sweet*?"

"Looks almost too good for the likes of us, missy," says the old driver, shaking his head dubiously.

The farmhouse is a pretty, old-fashioned building with a rose-covered porch. There is a little front garden, in which blow pansies, carnations red and white, sweet williams, forget-me-nots and stocks. The air is full of honeysuckle and the sweetness of hay, and there are big pine trees near by, smelling aromatic sweet. Hedges of wild roses border the opposite fields, swallows are circling round and round the house, and on the rail in front a particularly smart robin, with particularly neat legs, is elegantly perching.

Outside the farm are cows, ducks, rabbits, hens, horses, and little foals. Inside are Mr., Mrs., and Miss Baker, a grey parrot, a fat spaniel puppy, and four cats, two with tails and two without, who sit on four mats outside the "parlour" door. And here, at last, the travellers find a welcome.

"Isn't it all lovely?" says Leonora enthusiastically. "Oh, Theodora, *shan't* we be happy here?"

"I hope we shall—after we have had some tea," replies Theodora grumpily.

The search for rooms has been a long and exhausting one, and Theodora is hot and tired, and, not to put too fine a point upon it, Theodora is cross.

Here Miss Baker, in a smart, pink-print gown, enters, bringing the tea: home-made jam, yellow cream, home-made bread, and excellent tea.

After tea they hire Henrietta for two hours and go for a drive. Henrietta is a stout, grey pony, with a pink face, like a pig's, and drive is the only word that describes what you do when you sit behind Henrietta.

You drive her with whip, you drive her with chirps and encouraging words, but you never succeed in inspiring her or making her put any heart into her work.

With drooping head and dejected ears Henrietta crawls wearily along. She knows the country, and instinct warns her of the approach of the least little incline or small hill. When she meets another vehicle she stops dead, and when you whip her she only flicks her tail and hurries not at all.

"Think one of us had better get out and drag her by the head?" asks Theodora.

"Wish I could find out where I could hit her that she would feel it," says Leonora meditatively. "She must be vulnerable somewhere, if I could only find out where."

Here Theodora, who is always morbidly over-careful of horses, says hurriedly; "Oh, do let her alone; let her go her own way; it's no use worrying the poor thing, she evidently can't go any quicker."

"Oh, very well," says Leonora, "if you can drive so much better than I can, do. If you think I'm such a brute, I won't touch her again."

So saying, she flings herself back in the little pony-chaise, and Henrietta, taking advantage of the small quarrel, drops peacefully into a walk, and wanders along the road munching trifles of grass and clover where she can. After nearly an hour of pottering like this, Henrietta suddenly realises that she is within a mile of her stable, and absolutely scuds home.

"There, I told you so," says Leonora angrily. "She can go all right when she likes; it's nothing but sheer laziness, tiresome, pink-nosed little wretch!"

"The pony doesn't go very fast," she says to Henrietta's owner, who is standing at the door of the farmhouse waiting to take Henrietta back to her well-earned rest.

"Not fast?" he queries in astonishment. "Henrietta not *fast!* P'raps, miss," with a pitying smile, "you don't quite understand how to drive her. I wouldn't wish for a faster pony than that myself. Why, look at her, miss, never turned a hair all the way."

"No, I don't see how she could at that pace," mutters Euphemia.

"'Ad an offer to buy her only last week," continues the man, "but I wouldn't part from 'er not for anything. Ah, I should find it difficult to replace *'er*."

"Very, I should think," says Leonora.

"A most uncommon pony, that, miss."

"She is, indeed," says Theodora, turning to give a final glance to where Henrietta is standing, meek, with drooping head, heaving sides, and patient air of martyrdom. "*Most* uncommon."

The puppy is of a light-hearted, irresponsible disposition. He occupies his time chiefly in rearranging the light furniture. Such small articles as are portable—mats,



"'Friendless and lonely and sadly I roam,' chants Theodora."

rugs, and the like—he drags about from room to room, and leaves hanging on the stairs, where they form excellent traps for catching the feet in. He will laboriously drag a large and heavy red rug from the parlour out across the hall, and then, wearying suddenly of it, will leave it and hurry out to dig in the garden.

On the staircase he makes collections of trifles such as veils, boots, brushes, and so on, and when rather roughly bereft of these, he will lie flat on the lowest stair, gnawing the carpet.

When flicked at by Mrs. Baker's apron, he gives a yelp and, scurrying out, hurls himself on the carnation bed. The yelp is taken up and imitated by the grey parrot, who goes on yelping and howling till the house rings with the cries, and anyone passing would imagine the puppy was being killed.

"Reg'lar little Turk, *I* call 'im, miss," says cheery Mrs. Baker. "And as to that parrot, well, there! many's the time when Mr. Baker 'ave been out in the fields, that there parrot 'as called me: 'Mary, Mary—*Mary* my gal, where *are* yer?' and I've come running, thinking he wanted somethink. Well, there, you can't 'elp but laugh!"

The girls interview the parrot, which suddenly becomes dumb, until Theodora says contemptuously: "Bah! *you* can't talk."

The parrot looks at her with her head on one side, and says in a deep, chuckling sort of voice: "*Wot* yer say?"

The three wander round the farm, followed by Mackenzie, who for the moment is aggrieved and depressed—he has unearthed out of the fields a bone, a good bone, a bone any dog would have liked, and been deprived of it hurriedly by Euphemia, who has also called him a horrid thing. The rabbits are just having their dinner. Apparently in the hutch it is correct to put your front paws on the edge of the trough when feeding. Indeed, where there are a lot of you, it is highly necessary, or you may get no dinner. A better and a surer way is to be the first, and to get *into* the trough. Only this needs care and discretion, as it may tip over, when you will not only get a rather severe blow on the nose, but will lose your dinner, a misfortune which, whilst they watch, happens to the black rabbit, who is left scurrying round and round his hutch helpless and foodless, with his meal beneath the over-turned trough.

The chimes are playing "Home, sweet Home" listlessly, as if the evening were really too warm for much exertion. The hen with the large family of growing yellow chickens is, as usual, where she ought never to be, but always is, gardening in the front bed of stocks.

The cows are being gently driven home in the warm twilight.

"Come up, Polly, come up! oh, *come* up!" says the man attending them, in a tone of exasperation. Polly is the black cow, and certainly she is the slowest of walkers. She moons along, stopping every now and again as if to think something out. Then she shakes her head free of the flies, as if she hadn't got the answer to it after all, and moons along again, swishing her tail gently. A black tail with a white tassel at the end of it.

The hay is late, and already the fields of wheat and barley are ripening into gold, the green oats here and there are stirred by a deep ripple that waves across them like a shadow and is gone.

In peace and stillness, in mellow warmth, fragrant with evening scents, the three wander along the quiet road. By the side of the grass Leonora discovers a tiny green electric light. "A glow-worm!" she cries delightedly. She picks him up on a green leaf, to carry him home and place him in the front garden.

"Friendless and lonely and sadly I roam,
Far from my country, my family and my 'ome."

chants Theodora cheerfully over him.

He amiably lights himself up for their benefit for three nights following, but on the fourth he goes out. Whether Mackenzie, in his excited caperings, steps upon him, or whether in the nature of things he *would* go out after three days, or whether he has merely roamed away, who can say? But there he was, and there he isn't, when they look for his vivid little lamp on the fourth evening.

All sorts of living things they meet, baby bunnies straying adventurously far from their families, large fat beetles, wandering frogs. In the still evening the swallows are still circling round and round, a sleepy blackbird calls from the hedge, the trees rustle softly, with just a little swishing, murmuring sound.

A little later, the farm settles into peace and stillness. Cows, pigs, Henrietta, ducks, and puppy, all have retired to rest; the day of heat and toil is over, and until dawn the next day there will be no sound to break the stillness, except a dog barking far off down the village, or a sleepy, crooning sort of chuckle that comes from the hen-roost.

THE MONARCH OF PARK BARREN.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

FROM the cold spring lakes and sombre deeps of spruce forest, over which the bald granite peak of Old Saugamauk kept endless guard, came reports of a moose of more than royal stature, whose antlers beggared all records for symmetry and spread. From a home-coming lumber-cruiser here, a wandering Indian there, the word came straggling in, till the Settlements about the lower reaches of the river began to believe there might be some truth behind the wild tales. Then—for it was autumn, the season of gold and crimson falling leaves, and battles on the lake-shores under the white full moon—there followed stories of other moose seen fleeing in terror, with torn flanks and bleeding shoulders; and it was realised that the prowess of the great moose bull was worthy of his stature and his adornment. Apparently he was driving all the other bulls off the Saugamauk ranges.

By this time the matter became of interest to the guides. The stories came in from different quarters, so it was hard to guess just where the gigantic stranger was most likely to be found. To north and north-east of the mountain went the two Armstrongs, seeking the stranger's trail; while to south and south-eastward explored the Crimmins boys. If real, the giant bull had to be located; if a myth, he had to be exploded before raising impossible hopes in the hearts of visiting sportsmen.

Then suddenly arrived corroboration of all the stories. It came from Charley Crimmins. He was able to testify with conviction that the giant bull was no figment of Indian's imagination or lumberman's inventive humour. For it was he whose search had been successful.

In fact, he might have been content to have it just a shade less overwhelmingly successful. That there is such a thing as an embarrassment of success was borne in upon him when he found himself jumping madly for the nearest tree, with a moose that seemed to have the size of an elephant crashing through the thickets close behind him. He reached the tree just in time to swing well up among the branches. Then the tree quivered as the furious animal flung his bulk against it. Crimmins had lost his rifle in the flight. He could do nothing but sit shivering on his branch, making remarks so uncomplimentary that the great bull, if he could have appreciated them, would probably have established himself under that tree till vengeance was accomplished. But not knowing that he had been insulted, he presently grew tired of snorting at his captive and wandered off through the woods in search of more exciting occupation. Then, indignant beyond words, Charley descended from his retreat, and took his authoritative report in to the Settlements.

At first it was thought that there would be great hunting around Old Saugamauk, till those tremendous antlers should fall a prize to some huntsman not only lucky but rich. For no one who could not pay right handsomely for the chance might hope to be guided to the range where such an unequalled trophy was to be won. But when the matter, in all its authenticated details, came to the ears of Uncle Adam, dean of the guides of that region, he said "*No*" with an emphasis that left no room for argument. There should be no hunting around the slopes of Saugamauk for several seasons. If the great bull was the terror they made him out to be, then he had driven all the other bulls from his range, and there was nothing to be hunted but his royal self. "Well," decreed the far-seeing old guide, "we'll let him be for a bit, till his youngsters begin to grow up like him. Then there'll be no heads in all the rest of New Brunswick like them that comes from Old Saugamauk." This decree was accepted, the New Brunswick guides being among those who are wise enough to cherish the golden-egged goose.

In the course of that season the giant moose was seen several times by guides and woodsmen—but usually from a distance, as the inconsiderate impetuosity of his temper was not favourable to close or calm observation. The only people who really knew him were those who, like Charley Crimmins,

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had looked down upon his grunting wrath from the branches of a substantial tree.

Upon certain important details, however, all observers agreed. The stranger (for it was held that, driven by some southward wandering instinct, he had come down from the wild solitudes of the Gaspé Peninsula) was reckoned to be a good eight inches taller at the shoulders than any other moose of New Brunswick record, and several hundredweight heavier. His antlers, whose symmetry and palmation seemed perfect, were estimated to have a spread of sixty inches at least. That was the conservative estimate of Uncle Adam, who had made his observations with remarkable composure from a tree somewhat less lofty and sturdy than he would have chosen had he had time for choice.

In colour the giant was so dark that his back and flanks looked black except in the strongest sunlight. His mighty head, with long, deeply overhanging muzzle, was of a rich brown; while the under parts of his body, and the inner surfaces of his long, straight legs, were of a rusty fawn colour. His "bell"—as the long, shaggy appendix that hangs from the neck of a bull moose, a little below the throat, is called—was of unusual development, and the coarse hair adorning it peculiarly glossy. To bring down such a magnificent prize, and to carry off such a trophy as that unmatched head and antlers, the greatest sportsmen of America would have begrudged no effort or expense. But though the fame of the wonderful animal was cunningly allowed to spread to the ears of all sportsmen, its habitat seemed miraculously elusive. It was heard of on the Upsalquitch, the Nipisiguit, the Dungarvan, the Little Sou'west, but never, by some strange chance, in the country around Old Saugamauk. Visiting sportsmen hunted, spent money, dreamed dreams, followed great trails and brought down splendid heads, all over the Province; but no stranger with a rifle was allowed to see the proud antlers of the monarch of Saugamauk.

The right of the splendid moose to be called the Monarch of Saugamauk was settled beyond all question one moonlight night when the surly old bear who lived in a crevasse far up under the stony crest of the mountain came down and attempted to dispute it. The wild kindreds, as a rule, are most averse to unnecessary quarrels. Unless their food or their mates are at stake, they will fight only under extreme provocation, or when driven to bay. They are not ashamed to run away, rather than press matters too far and towards a doubtful issue. A bull moose and a bear are apt to give each other a wide berth, respecting each other's prowess. But there are exceptions to all rules, especially where bears, the most individual of our wild cousins, are concerned. And this bear was in a particularly savage mood. Just in the mating season, he had lost his mate, who had been shot by an Indian. The old bear did not know what had happened to her, but he was ready to avenge her upon anyone who might cross his path.

Unluckily for him, it was the great moose who crossed his path; and the luck was all Charley Crimmins's, who chanced to be the spectator of what happened there beside the moonlit lake.

Charley was on his way over to the head of the Nipisiguit, when it occurred to him that he would like to get another glimpse of the great beast who had so ignominiously discomfited him. Peeling a sheet of bark from the nearest white birch, he twisted himself a "moose-call," then climbed into the branches of a willow which spread out over the edge of the shining lake. From this concealment he began to utter persuasively the long, uncouth, melancholy call by which the moose cow summons her mate.

Sometimes these vast northern solitudes seem, for hours together, as if they were empty of all life. It is as if a wave of distrust had passed simultaneously over all the creatures of the wild. At other times the lightest occasion suffices to call life out of the stillness. Crimmins had not sounded more than twice his deceptive call, when the bushes behind the strip of beach crackled sharply. But it was not the great bull that stepped forth into the moonlight. It was a cow moose. She came out with no effort at concealment, and walked up and down the beach, angrily looking for her imagined rival.

When the uneasy animal's back was towards him, Crimmins called again, a short, soft call. The cow jumped around as if she had been struck, and the stiff hair along her neck stood up with jealous rage. But there was no rival anywhere in sight, and she stood completely mystified, shaking her ungainly head, peering into the dark undergrowth, and snorting tempestuously as if challenging the invisible rival to appear. Then suddenly her angry ridge of hair sank down, she seemed to shrink together upon herself, and with a convulsive bound she sprang away

from the dark undergrowth, landing with a splash in the shallow water alongshore. At the same instant the black branches were burst apart, and a huge bear, forepaws upraised and jaws wide open, launched himself forth into the open.

Disappointed at missing his first spring, the bear rushed furiously upon his intended victim, but the cow, for all her apparent awkwardness, was as agile as a deer. Barely eluding his rush, she went shambling up the shore at a terrific pace, plunged into the woods, and vanished. The bear checked himself at the water's edge, and turned, holding his nose high in the air, as if disdaining to acknowledge that he had been foiled.

Crimmins hesitatingly raised his rifle. Should he bag this bear, or should he wait and sound his call again a little later, in the hope of yet summoning the great bull? As he hesitated, and the burly black shape in the moonlight also stood hesitating, the thickets rustled and parted almost beneath him, and the mysterious bull strode forth, with his head held high.



"He reached the tree just in time to swing well up among the branches."

He had come in answer to what he thought was the summons of his mate; but when he saw the bear, his rage broke all bounds. He doubtless concluded that the bear had driven his mate away. With a bawling roar he thundered down upon the intruder.

The bear, as we have seen, was in no mood to give way. His small eyes glowed suddenly red with vengeful fury, as he wheeled and gathered himself, half crouching upon his haunches, to meet the tremendous attack. In this attitude all his vast strength was perfectly poised, ready for use in any direction. The moose, had he been attacking a rival of his own kind, would have charged with antlers down, but against all other enemies the weapons he relied upon were his gigantic hoofs, edged like chisels. As he reached his sullenly waiting antagonist he reared on his hind-legs, towering like a black rock about to fall and crush whatever was in its path. Like pile-drivers his forehoofs struck downwards, one closely following the other.

The bear swung aside as lightly as a

weasel, and eluded, but only by a hair's breadth, that destructive stroke. As he wheeled he delivered a terrific, swinging blow, with his armed forepaw, upon his assailant's shoulder.

The blow was a fair one. Any ordinary moose bull would have gone down beneath it, with his shoulder-joint shattered to splinters. But this great bull merely staggered and stood for a second in amazement. Then he whipped about and darted upon the bear with a sort of hoarse scream, his eyes flashing with a veritable madness. He neither reared to strike, nor lowered his antlers to gore, but seemed intent upon tearing the foe with his teeth, as a mad horse might. At the sight of such resistless fury Crimmins involuntarily tightened his grip on his branch and muttered: "That ain't no *moose!* It's a——" But before he could finish his comparison, astonishment stopped him. The bear, unable with all his strength and weight to withstand the shock of that straight and incredibly swift charge, had been rolled over and over down the gentle slope of the beach. At the same moment the moose, blinded by his rage and unable to check himself, had tripped over a log that lay hidden in the bushes, and fallen headlong on his nose.

Utterly cowed by the overwhelming completeness of this overthrow, the bear was on his feet again before his conqueror, and scurrying to refuge like a frightened rat. He made for the nearest tree, and that nearest tree, to Crimmins's dismay, was Crimmins's. The startled guide swung himself hastily to a higher branch which stretched well out over the water.

Before the great bull could recover his footing, the fugitive had gained a good start. But desperately swift though he was, the doom that thundered behind him was swifter, and caught him just as he was scrambling into the tree. Those implacable antlers ploughed his hindquarters remorselessly, till he squealed with pain and terror. His convulsive scrambling raised him, the next instant, beyond reach of that punishment; but immediately the great bull reared, and struck him again and again with his terrible hoofs, almost crushing the victim's maimed haunches. The bear bawled again, but maintained his clutch of desperation, and finally drew himself up to a safe height, where he crouched on a branch, whimpering pitifully, while the victor raged below.

At this moment the bear caught sight of Crimmins eyeing him steadily. To the cowed beast this was a new peril menacing him. With a frightened glance he crawled out on another branch, as far as it could be trusted to support his weight. And there he clung, huddled and shivering like a beaten puppy, looking from the man to the moose, from the moose to the man, as if he feared they might both jump at him together.

But the sympathies of Crimmins were now entirely with the unfortunate bear, his fellow prisoner, and he looked down at the arrogant tyrant below with a sincere desire to humble his pride with a rifle-bullet. But he was too far-seeing a guide for that. He contented himself with climbing a little lower till he attracted the giant's attention to himself, and then dropping half a handful of tobacco, dry and powdery, into those snorting red nostrils.

It was done with nice precision, just as the giant drew in his breath. He got the fullest benefit of the pungent dose; and such trivial matters as bears and men were instantly forgotten in the paroxysms which seized him. His roaring sneezes seemed as if they would rend his mighty bulk asunder. He fairly stood upon his head, burrowing his muzzle into the moist leafage, as he strove to purge the exasperating torment from his nostrils. Crimmins laughed till he nearly fell out of the tree, while the bear forgot to whimper as he stared in terrified bewilderment. At last the moose stuck his muzzle up in the air and began backing blindly over stones and bushes, as if trying to get away from his own nose. Plump into four or five feet of icy water he backed. The shock seemed to give him an idea. He plunged his head under, and fell to wallowing and snorting and raising such a prodigious disturbance that all the lake shores rang with it. Then he bounced out upon the beach again, and dashed off through the woods as if a million hornets were at his ears.

Weak with laughter, Crimmins climbed down out of his refuge, waved an amiable farewell to the stupefied bear, and resumed the trail for the Nipisiguit.

II.

For the next two years the fame of the great moose kept growing, adding to itself various wonders and extravagances till it assumed almost the dimensions of a myth. Sportsmen came from all over the world in the hope of bagging those unparalleled antlers. They shot moose, caribou, deer,

and bear, and went away disappointed only in one regard. But at last they began to swear that the giant was a mere fiction of the New Brunswick guides, designed to lure the hunters. The guides, therefore, began to think it was time to make good and show their proofs. Even Uncle Adam was coming around to this view, when suddenly word came from the Crown Land Department at Fredericton that the renowned moose must not be allowed to fall to any rifle. A special permit had been issued for his capture and shipment out of the country, that he might be the ornament of a famous Zoological Park and a lively proclamation of what the New Brunswick forests could produce.

The idea of taking the King of Saugamauk alive seemed amusing to the guides, and to



"With a bawling roar he thundered down upon the intruder."

Crimmins particularly. But Uncle Adam, whose colossal frame and giant strength seemed to put him peculiarly in sympathy with the great moose bull, declared that it could and should be done, for he would do it. Upon this, scepticism vanished, even from the smile of Charley Crimmins, who voiced the general sentiment when he said—

"Uncle Adam ain't the man to bite off any more than he can chew!"

But Uncle Adam was in no hurry. He had such a respect for his adversary that he would not risk losing a single point in the approaching contest. He waited till the mating season and the hunting season were long past, and the great bull's pride and temper somewhat cooled. He waited, moreover, for the day to come—along towards midwinter—when those titantic antlers should loosen at their roots, and fall off at the touch of the first light branch that might brush against them. This, the wise old woodsman knew, would be the hour of the King's least arrogance. Then, too, the northern snows would be lying deep and soft and encumbering, over all the upland slopes whereon the moose loved to browse.

Along towards mid-February word came to Uncle Adam that the Monarch had "yarded up," as the phrase goes, on the southerly slope of Old Saugamauk, with three cows and their calves of the previous spring under his protection. This meant that, when the snow had grown too deep to permit the little herd to roam at will, he had chosen a sheltered area where the birch, poplar, and cherry, his favourite forage, were abundant, and there had trodden out a maze of deep paths which led to all the choicest browsing, and centred about a cluster of ancient firs so thick as to afford covert from the fiercest storms. The news was what the wise old woodsman had been waiting for. With three of his men, a pair of horses, a logging-sled, axes, and an unlimited supply of rope, he went to capture the King.

It was a clear, still morning, so cold that the great trees snapped sharply under the grip of the bitter frost. The men went on snowshoes, leaving the teams hitched in a thicket on the edge of a logging road some three or four hundred yards from the "moose-yard." The sun glittered keenly on the long white alleys which led this way and that at

random through the forest. The snow, undisturbed and accumulating for months, was heaped in strange shapes over hidden bushes, stumps, and rocks. The tread of the snowshoes made a furtive crunching sound as it rhythmically broke the crisp surface.

Far off through the stillness the great moose, lying with the rest of the herd in their shadowy covert, caught the ominous sound. He lurched to his feet and stood listening, while the herd watched him anxiously, awaiting his verdict as to whether that strange sound meant peril or no.

For reasons which we have seen, the giant bull knew little of man, and that little not of a nature to command any great respect. Nevertheless, at this season of the year, his blood cool, his august front shorn of its ornament and defence, he was seized with an incomprehensible apprehension. After all, as he felt vaguely, there was an unknown menace about man; and his ear told him that there were several approaching. A few months earlier he would have stamped his huge hoofs, thrashed the bushes with his colossal antlers, and stormed forth to chastise the intruders. But now, he sniffed the sharp air, snorted uneasily, drooped his big ears, and led a rapid but dignified retreat down one of the deep alleys of his maze.

This was exactly what Uncle Adam had looked for. His object was to force the herd out of the maze of alleys, wherein they could move swiftly, and drive them floundering through the deep, soft snow, which would wear them out before they could go half a mile. Spreading his men so widely that they commanded all trails by which the fugitives might return, he followed up the flight at a run. And he accompanied the pursuit with a riot of shouts and yells and laughter, designed to shake his quarry's heart with the fear of the unusual. Wise in all woodcraft, Uncle Adam knew that one of the most daunting of all sounds, to the creatures of the wild, was that of human laughter, so inexplicable and seemingly so idle.

At other times the great bull would merely have been enraged at this blatant clamour and taken it as a challenge. But now he retreated to the furthest corner of his maze. From this point there were but two paths of return, and along both the uproar was closing in upon him. Over the edge of the snow—which was almost breast high to him, and deep enough to bury the calves; hopelessly deep, indeed, for any of the herd but himself to venture through—he gave a wistful look towards the depths of the cedar swamps in the valley, where he believed he could baffle all pursuers. Then his courage—but without his autumnal fighting rage—came back to him. His herd was his care. He crowded the cows and calves between himself and the snow, and turned to face his pursuers as they came running and shouting through the trees.

When Uncle Adam saw that the King was going to live up to his kingly reputation and fight rather than be driven off into the deep snow, he led the advance more cautiously till his forces were within twenty-five or thirty paces of the huddling herd. Here he paused, for the guardian of the herd was beginning to stamp ominously with his great, clacking hoofs, and the reddening light in his eyes showed that he might charge at any instant.

He did not charge, however, because his attention was diverted by the strange actions of the men, who had stopped their shouting and begun to chop trees. It amazed him to see the flashing axes bite savagely into the great trunks and send the white chips flying. The whole herd watched with wide eyes, curious and apprehensive; till suddenly a tree toppled, swept the hard blue sky, and came down with a crashing roar across one of the runaways. The cows and calves bounded wildly, clear out into the snow. But the King, though his eyes dilated with amazement, stood his ground and grunted angrily.

A moment more and another tree, huge-limbed and dense, came down across the other runaway. Two more followed, and the herd was cut off from its retreat. The giant bull, of course, with his vast stride and colossal strength, could have smashed his way through and over the barrier; but the others, to regain the safe mazes of the "yard," would have had to make a detour through the engulfing snow.

Though the King was now fairly cornered, Uncle Adam was puzzled to know what to do next. In his hesitation, he felled some more trees, dropping the last one so close that the herd was obliged to crowd back to avoid being struck by the falling top. This, at last, was too much for the King, who had never before known what it was to be crowded. While his followers plunged away in terror, burying themselves helplessly before they had gone a dozen yards, he bawled with fury and charged upon his tormentors.

Though the snow, as we have seen, came

up to his chest, the giant's strength and swiftness were such that the woodsmen were taken by surprise, and Uncle Adam, who was in front, was almost caught. In spite of his bulk, he turned and sprang away with the agility of a wildcat; but if his snowshoes had turned and hindered him for one half second, he would have been struck down and trodden to a jelly in the smother of snow. Seeing the imminence of his peril, the other woodsmen threw up their rifles; but Uncle Adam, though extremely busy for the moment, saw them out of the corner of his eye as he ran, and angrily ordered them not to shoot. He knew what he was about, and felt quite sure of himself, though the enemy was snorting at his very heels.

For perhaps thirty or forty yards the bull was able to keep up this almost incredible pace. Then the inexorable pull of the snow began to tell, even upon such thews as his, and his pace slackened. But his rage showed no sign of cooling. So, being very accommodating, Uncle Adam slackened his own pace correspondingly, that his pursuer might not be discouraged. And the chase went on. But it went slower, and slower, and slower, till at last it stopped with Uncle Adam still just about six feet in the lead, and the great moose still blind-mad, but too exhausted to go one foot further. Then Uncle Adam chuckled softly and called for the ropes. There was kicking, of course, and furious lunging and wild snorting, but the woodsmen were skilful and patient, and the King of Old Saugamauk was conquered. In a little while he lay upon his side, trussed up as securely and helplessly as a papoose in its birch-bark carrying-cradle. There was nothing left of his kingship but to snort regal defiance, to which his captors offered not the slightest retort. In his bonds he was carried off to the Settlements, on the big logging-sled, drawn by the patient horses whom he scorned.

III.

AFTER this ignominy, for days the King was submissive, with the sullen numbness of despair. Life for him became a succession of stunning shocks and roaring change. He would be put into strange box-prisons, which would straightway begin to rush terribly through the world with a voice of thunder. Through the cracks in the box he would watch trees and fields and hills race by in madness of flight. He would be taken out of the box, and murmuring crowds would gape at him till the black mane along his neck would begin to rise in something of his old anger. Then someone would drive the crowd away, and he would slip back into his stupor. He did not know which he hated most, the roaring boxes, the fleeing landscapes, or the staring crowds. At last he came to a loud region where there were no trees, but only what seemed to him vast, towering, naked rocks, red, grey, yellow, brown, full of holes from which issued men in swarms. These terrible rocks ran in endless rows, and through them he came at last to a wide field, thinly scattered with trees. There was no seclusion in it, no deep, dark, shadowy hemlock covert to lie down in; but it was green, and it was spacious, and it was more or less quiet. So when he was turned loose in it, he was almost glad. He lifted his head, with a spark of the old arrogance returning to his eyes. And through dilating nostrils he drank the free air till his vast lungs thrilled with almost forgotten life.

The men who had brought him to the park—this bleak barren he would have called it, had he had the faculty of thinking in terms of human speech, this range more fitted for the frugal caribou than for a ranger of the deep forests like himself—these men stood watching him curiously after they had loosed him from his bonds. For a few minutes he forgot all about them. Then his eyes fell on them, and a heat crept slowly into his veins as he looked. Slowly he began to resume his kingship. His eyes changed curiously, and a light, fiery and fearless, flamed in their depths. His mane began to bristle.

"It's time for us to get out of this. That fellow's beginning to remember he has some old scores to settle up!" remarked the Director coolly to the head-keeper and his assistants; and they all stepped backwards, with a casual air towards the big gate, which stood ajar to receive them. Just as they reached it, the old fire and fury surged back into the exile's veins, but heated sevenfold by the ignominies which he had undergone. With a hoarse and bawling roar, such as had never before been heard in those guarded precincts, he launched himself upon his gaolers. But they nimbly slipped through the gate and dropped the massive bars into their sockets.

They were just in time. The next instant the King had hurled himself with all his weight upon the barrier. The sturdy ironwork and the panels on either side of the posts clanged, groaned, and even yielded

a fraction of an inch beneath the shock. But in the rebound they thrust their assailant backward with startling violence. Bewildered, he glared at the obstacle, which looked so slender, yet was so strong to baulk him of his vengeance. Then, jarred and aching, he withdrew haughtily to explore his new domain. The Director, gazing after him, nodded with supreme satisfaction.

"Those fellows up in New Brunswick told no lies!" said he.

"He certainly is a peach!" assented the head-keeper heartily. "When he grows his new antlers, I reckon we will have to enlarge the park."

The great exile found his new range interesting to explore, and began to forget his indignation. Privacy it had not, for the trees at this season were all leafless, and there were no dense fir or spruce thickets into which he could withdraw, to look forth unseen upon this alien landscape. But there were certain rough boulders behind which he could lurk. And there were films of ice, and wraiths of thin snow in the hollows, the chill touch of which helped him to feel more or less at home. In the distance he caught sight of a range of those high, square rocks wherein the men dwelt; and hating them deeply, he turned and pressed on in the opposite direction over a gentle rise and across a little valley; till suddenly, among the trees, he came upon a curious barrier of meshed stuff, something like a gigantic cobweb. Through the meshes he could distinctly see the country beyond, and it seemed to be just the country he desired, more wooded and inviting than what he had traversed. Confidently he pushed upon the woven obstacle; but to his amazement it did not give way before him. He eyed it resentfully. How absurd that so frail a thing should venture to forbid him passage. He thrust upon it again, more brusquely, to be just as brusquely denied. The hot blood blazed to his head, and he dashed himself upon it with all his strength. The impenetrable but elastic netting yielded for a space, then sprang back with an impetuosity that flung him clear off his feet. He fell with a loud grunt, lay for a moment dismayed, then got up and eyed his incomprehensible adversary with a blank stare. He was learning so many strange lessons that it was difficult to assimilate them all at once.

The following morning, when he was feasting on a pile of the willow and poplar forage which he loved, and which had appeared as if by magic close beside the mysterious barrier, he saw some men, perhaps a hundred yards away, throw open a section of the barrier. Forgetting to be angry at their intrusion on his range, he watched them curiously. A moment more, and a little herd of his own kind, apparently quite indifferent to the men, followed them into the range. He was not surprised at their appearance, for his nose had already told him there were moose about. But he was surprised to see them on friendly terms with man.

There were several cows in the herd, with a couple of awkward yearlings; and the King, much gratified, ambled forward with huge strides to meet them and take them under his gracious protection. But a moment later two fine young bulls came into his view, following the rest of the herd at a more dignified pace. The King stopped, lowered his mighty front, laid back his ears like an angry stallion, and grunted a hoarse warning. The stiff black hair along his neck slowly arose and stood straight up.

The two young bulls stared in stupid astonishment at this tremendous apparition, It was not the fighting season, so they had no jealousy, and felt nothing but a cold indifference towards the stranger. But as he came striding down the field his attitude was so menacing, his stature so formidable, that they could not but realise there was trouble brewing. It was contrary to all traditions that they should take the trouble to fight in midwinter, when they had no antlers and their blood was sluggish. Nevertheless, they could not brook to be so affronted, as it were in their own citadel.

Their eyes began to gleam angrily, and they advanced, shaking their heads, to meet the insolent stranger. The keepers, surprised, drew together close by the gate; while one of them left hurriedly and ran towards a building which stood a little way off among the trees.

As the King swept down upon the herd, bigger and blacker than any bull they had ever seen before, the cows shrank away and stood staring placidly. They were well-fed, and for the time indifferent to all else in their sheltered world. Still, a fight is a fight, and if there was going to be one, they were ready enough to look on.

Alas for the right of possession when it runs counter to the right of might! The two young bulls were at home and in the right, and their courage was sound. But when that black whirlwind from the fastnesses of Old Saugamauk fell upon



'For perhaps thirty or forty yards the bull was able to keep up this almost incredible pace."

them, it seemed that they had no more rights at all.

Side by side they confronted the onrushing doom. At the moment of impact, they reared and struck savagely with their sharp hoofs. But the gigantic stranger troubled himself with no such details. He merely fell upon them, like a blind but raging force, irresistible as a falling hillside and almost as disastrous. They both went down before him, like calves, and rolled over and over, stunned and sprawling.

The completeness of this victory, establishing his supremacy beyond cavil, should have satisfied the King, especially as this was not the mating season and there could be no question of rivalry. But his heart was bursting with injury, and his thirst for vengeance was raging to be glutted. As the vanquished bulls struggled to recover their feet he bounded upon the nearest and trod him down again mercilessly. The other, meanwhile, fled for his life, stricken with shameless terror; and the exile, leaving his victim, went thundering in pursuit, determined that both should be annihilated. It was a terrifying sight, the black giant, mane erect, neck out-thrust, mouth open, eyes glaring with implacable fury, sweeping down upon the fugitive with his terrific strides.

But just then, when another stride would have sufficed, a strange thing happened! A flying noose settled over the pursuer's head, tightened, jerked his neck aside, and threw him with a violence that knocked the wind clean out of his raging body. While his vast lungs sobbed and gasped to recover the vital air, other nooses whipped about his legs; and before he could recover himself even enough to struggle, he was once more trussed up as he had been by Uncle Adam amid the snows of Saugamauk.

In this ignominous position, his heart bursting with shame and impotence, he was left lying while his two battered victims were lassoed and led away. Since it was plain that the King would not suffer them to live in his kingdom, even as humble subjects, they were to be removed to some more modest domain; for the King, whether he deserved it or not, was to have the best reserved for him.

It was little kingly he felt, the fettered giant, as he lay there panting on his side. The cows came up and gazed at him with a kind of placid scorn, till his furious snortings, and the undaunted rage that flamed in his eyes, made them draw back apprehensively. Then the men who had overthrown him returned. They dragged him unceremoniously up to the gate, slipped his bonds, and discreetly put themselves on the other side of the barrier before he could get to his feet. With a grunt he wheeled and faced them with such hate in his eyes that they thought he would once more hurl himself upon the bars. But he had learned his lesson. For a few moments he stood quivering. Then, as if recognising at last a mastery too absolute even for him to challenge, he shook himself violently, turned away, and stalked off to join the herd.

That evening, about sundown, it turned colder. Clouds gathered heavily, and there was the sense of coming snow in the air. A great wind, rising fitfully, drew down out of the north. Seeing no covert to his liking, the King led his little herd to the top of a naked knoll, where he could look about and choose a shelter. But that great wind out of the north, thrilling in his nostrils, got into his heart and made him forget what he had come for. Out across the alien gloom he stared, across the huddled, unknown masses of the dark, till he thought he saw the bald summit of Old Saugamauk rising out of its forests, till he thought he heard the wind roar in the spruce tops, the dead branches clash and crack. The cows, for a time, huddled close to his massive flanks, expecting some new thing from his vast strength. Then, as the storm gathered, they remembered the shelter which man had provided for them, and the abundant forage it contained. One after the other they turned, and filed away slowly down the slopes, through the dim trees, towards the corner where they knew a gate would stand open for them, and then a door into a warm-smelling shed. The King, lost in his dream, did not notice their going. But suddenly, feeling himself alone, he started and looked about. The last of the yearlings, at its mother's heels, was just vanishing through the windy gloom. He hesitated, started to follow, then stopped abruptly. Let them go! They would return to him, probably. Turning back to his station on the knoll, he stood with his head held high, his nostrils drinking the cold, while the winter night closed in upon him, and the wind out of his own north rushed and roared solemnly in his face.

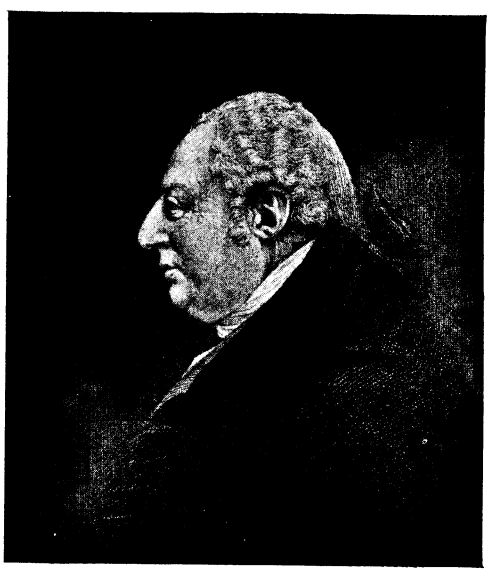
THE INLAND NAVIGATION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY WILLIAM RALPH BALDWIN-WISEMAN.

I.—HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

A HUNDRED years ago the canals of this country occupied a much more prominent position in the affairs of daily life than that they now enjoy. Then they had the sole command of the inland carrying trade, their shareholders received splendid dividends, their shares were quoted at fancy premiums and their tolls were, not infrequently, so exorbitant that traders longed for a means to curb their avarice and some of the more literary of their number, such as Mr. Sandars, of Liverpool, warmly advocated the promotion of railways as a means of affording cheaper freights than those afforded by the canals.

To-day, by the strange perversities of fate, there is a complete reversal of the *rôles* of a century ago, and some members of the community, whilst complaining that the railway charges are excessive—a question which I hope to discuss at a later point in these articles—just as warmly advocate that the canals should be resuscitated and improved, as a means of affording cheaper transport and stimulating the trade of the districts through which they pass.



THE DUKE OF BRIDGEWATER.

Excepting ship canals, such as that at Manchester—which should never be included in a consideration of barge canals, although, strangely enough, statistics of its traffic and earnings, which are more properly those of dock and harbour returns, appear in the canal traffic returns of the Board of Trade—and a few efficient and well-organised inland navigations, such as the Aire and Calder, Weaver and some other canals, the trade is so small, or has so long since been non-existent, that some advocates of canal resuscitation can but recommend that these waterways should be reorganised, extended and subsidised by the State or controlled by public trusts, which, despite hopeful assurances to the contrary and optimistic statements of problematical advantages to be reaped in the near future, implies in all certainty, if the programme is carried out, an almost immediate and not inconsiderable increase in the already heavy burden of local or national taxation.

In approaching a subject of such complexity as this question of canal resuscitation, there is a danger, on the one hand, of arriving at a wrong conclusion by a too hasty generalisation based upon a paucity of facts, or, on the other hand, the problem may be so overburdened with detail that the real issues may be entirely obscured. Whilst hoping to avoid either error, I shall endeavour, in this and the succeeding articles, to place the most essential data without bias before my readers, leaving the final arbitrament to them; dealing first with a brief outline of the history of British canals and later with the engineering and economic problems which arise in the construction, maintenance and operation of canals in this country, included in which I shall, as occasion arises, refer to the competitive traffic by rail and by sea and the services which canals afford to our commercial competitors on the continents of Europe and America.

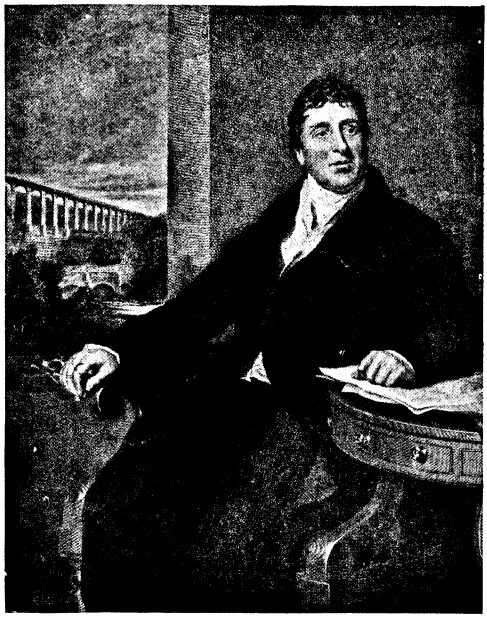
Canals being amongst the oldest works of antiquity, one is somewhat tempted to describe the inland navigations of Assyria, China and Egypt; but, interesting as their

description may be from an historical point of view, it has so small a bearing on the present question, as to be as immaterial as a record of the names of the boatmen who navigated those waters, or of the serfs who toiled in the construction and repair of the watercourses.

The Romans, by their engineering skill—handmaid, as it were, to their military genius—instituted a fine system of roads and an equally important, but less extensive and less well-known, system of water transport. Some rivers, such as the Wensum, at Norwich, still bear on their banks the ruins of the water-towers, or small forts, which, situated at short distances apart, afforded protection to the transports taking food and munitions to the camps, such as that at Caister; and to their energies are also ascribed the construction of the first British canals, the Caerdyke and the Fossdyke. The former extended for a distance of about forty miles from Peterborough to the River Witham, near Lincoln and is now non-existent; the latter, about eleven miles long, connected Lincoln with the River Trent near Torksey. This waterway was rendered navigable in 1121, improved by Smeaton in 1782, and still further improved by the Messrs. Stevenson in the nineteenth century, and is now the property of the Great Northern and Great Eastern Railways Joint Committee.



JAMES BRINDLEY.

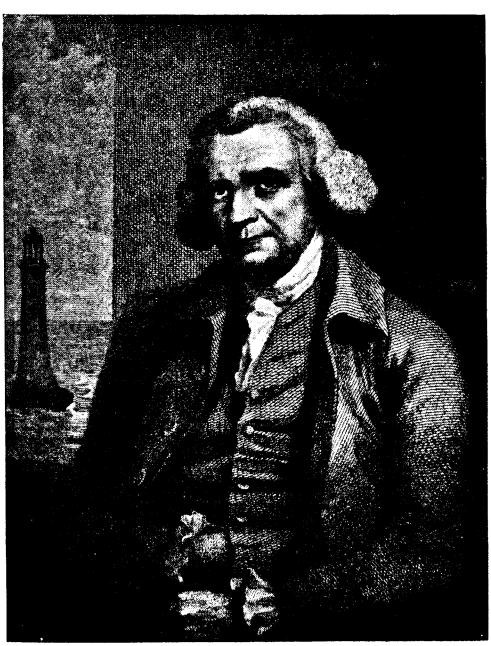


THOMAS TELFORD.

From the earliest times communities were attracted to localities where drinking-water was easily procurable and as their trading instincts developed, the natural facilities for transport which were readily available, doubtlessly contributed materially to their commercial aggrandisement and such cities as Canterbury, York, Rochester and Norwich, although probably owing their origin to the earlier establishment of a monastic institution, were indebted for their pre-eminence in mediæval times to the traffic facilities afforded by the waterways which passed through their midst; and it is not improbable that the architectural magnificence of these world-famous cathedrals may also be due to the facilities these waterways afforded in the collection of the stone and wood used in their construction. The petty jealousies within and without the towns, and the rigid conservatism of the various guilds, however, militated against that steady development of trade and trading facilities to which we are so accustomed at the present time; it is, therefore, not surprising that it was not until 1399 that the first river improvement Act was passed. This was merely a general Act, authorising the appointment of commissioners to conserve and improve the great rivers, presumably the Thames, Humber, and Severn, as it is to these that Chief Justice Fortescue refers in his book, "Commodities of England,"

written just fifty-two years later. In 1423, the Thames is specifically mentioned in an Act authorising justices to remove weirs and other obstructions; but it was not until the following year that a veritable rivers improvement Act was passed, empowering commissioners duly appointed by the Chancellor to remove shoals, etc., from the channel of the River Lea, the cost of such work to be defrayed by a toll of a groat on each vessel using the waterway. Numerous improvement Acts for the rivers Thames, Severn, Ouse, Stour, and Tyne were passed from time to time, but it was not until 1544 that John Trew planned and later constructed the first English canal, known as the Exeter Canal, which was originally only 1·8 miles long, 16 feet wide, and 3 feet deep, but it was subsequently enlarged and extended and is at present 5·5 miles long and 15 feet deep and able to accommodate vessels 125 feet long, 26 feet beam and 12 feet 6 inches draught.

Previous to the fifteenth century, the canals were but level reaches of water in lowland areas, or, at the utmost, small differences of level were overcome by holding up a considerable stretch of water by a weir and bodily transporting the boat from one level to the other; but during this century locks were invented, either by the Dutch or by the Italians, probably the latter.



JOHN SMEATON.



JOHN RENNIE.

Some writers ascribe the invention to Philip Visconti in 1439; others to the brothers Pietro and Joachim Domenico, of Viterbo, in 1481; whilst others, again, accord the honour to that Admirable Crichton of mediæval times, Leonardo da Vinci, who in 1486 installed six locks on the Milanese Canal, overcoming a fall of 34 feet thereby. Locks were not, however, adopted in this country for many years after this and it is somewhat uncertain when they were first used here; but in 1617, letters patent were granted by James I. to John Gasson for an improved method of constructing locks and weirs, so that doubtless they were in use somewhat before that date.

In the following year another considerable improvement was made in methods of water conservancy, as letters patent were granted to John Gilbert for a water-plough, or dredger, to be used for the removal of shoals from the bed of the Thames and other rivers.

The brilliant but short-lived canal era dawned in 1737 with the passing of the first Act to make the Worsley Brook navigable to its junction with the Irwell, near the then small town of Manchester. Eighteen years later an Act was passed authorising the construction of the Sankey Brook Navigation. The original design was merely, as in the case of the Worsley Brook, to deepen and enlarge the channel; but the eventual

construction was an entirely independent cut or canal, which only crossed through the brook at a point about two miles from Sankey Bridge.

In 1759, the golden age of canals was inaugurated with the passing of the first Bridgewater Canal Act, and for a brief period Brindley, Telford, Smeaton, and Rennie, the fathers of the ancient, yet most modern, profession of civil engineering, concentrated their brilliant intellects upon the construction of these works, which, after the opening of the first Bridgewater Canals, appealed so forcibly to the public favour, for which there need be little wonder when one recalls the state of the roads at that time.

Lord Hervey, writing to a friend in 1736, complained that the solitude of Kensington —now harrowed by the rumble of the motor-'bus—was as that of a rock in mid-ocean, between which and London was an impassable gulf of mud.

Pennant records that in 1740 a six-horsed stage coach, though running from early morning till some hours after sunset, took six full days to travel from Chester to London—an almost incredible time in these days of non-stop motor runs—putting up for the night at Whitchurch, Coventry, Northampton, Dunstable and the Welsh Harp. A few years previous to this the timing must have been even worse, as at that date no fewer than 1,100 turnpike Acts had then been passed.

In 1754, the coach time from London to Manchester was, under the best circumstances, four and a half days, which was improved six years later by the institution of the Flying Machine Coach, advertised to perform the journey, "if *God* permits," in three days, the fare for this most expeditious journey being two guineas; in strange contrast with the present journey of 183½ miles, by dining-car express, in three hours forty-five minutes, for a fare of 15*s.* 5½*d.*

In this same year, the best journeys from London to Glasgow, Edinburgh and Sheffield occupied fourteen, ten and three days respectively and not infrequently these times were considerably prolonged by breakdowns; in fact, so common were these accidents that most coaches carried a bag of wheelwright's tools in order to effect such repairs as might be possible upon the road; and it is recorded that one of the great civil engineers of the day, *en route* to a consultation with a lordly client, applied his skill to the repair of a damaged wheel and was considered an inferior person for his pains by his snobbish fellow-passengers, one of whom suffered some humiliation the following day upon meeting him in company with his host. Even so late as 1810 some of the roads were in such a bad condition that posting was attended with much danger and it is recorded in that year, that the legs of three post-horses were broken in a single week, upon the Shrewsbury to Holyhead road, owing to its state of repair.

Bad as were the conditions for the transport of passengers, the transport of freight was in an even worse plight. Wagons were but little used and goods were carried in side panniers or packs upon horses, eight such horses being necessary to transport a ton of fuel. The freight charges were consequently so excessive that but little freight was thus carried; and, to quote a very bad example, coal mined at Worsley, now almost within the Manchester city boundaries and worth only 6*s.* 8*d.* a ton at the pit mouth, could not be purchased at a much less price than 15*s.* per ton in Manchester. Yet soon after the opening of the Bridgewater Canal, in 1761, it could be procured in Manchester at a price per ton only a few pence greater than that which it fetched at Worsley.

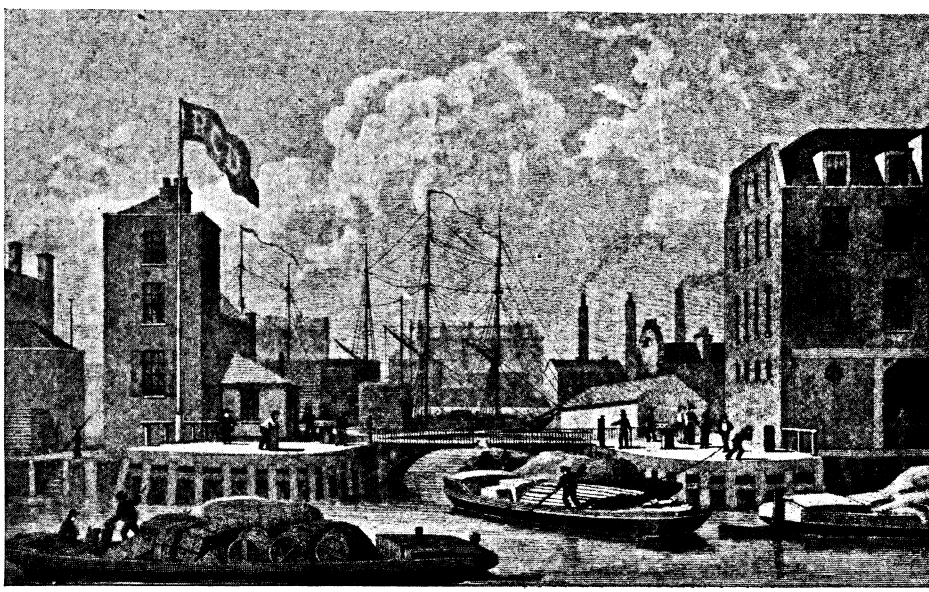
Not only did the canals attract a considerable freight traffic, but some of them also had a considerable passenger traffic. The Duke of Bridgewater organised a service of passenger boats between Manchester and Worsley in 1772 and in later years the services were extended to Runcorn, Warrington and Liverpool. The fares averaged about a penny a mile and the boats employed in the service afforded accommodation for from sixty to 120 passengers. Even as late as 1806 it is recorded that three detachments of troops, ordered to Dublin, were despatched from London on December 19, 20 and 21, by the Paddington Canal, in boats which accommodated about sixty men each. Special relays of horses were provided for the haulage of these transports, which reached Liverpool in the marvellously short time of seven days, a run now performed by various express trains in about three and a half hours.

The Act authorising the construction of the first Bridgewater Canal, a short length of canal about 8·5 miles long, between Worsley and Manchester, was passed in 1759. Under this Act it was proposed to cross the Irwell valley by a series of locks, descending to the river-level, succeeded by an ascending series upon the other side of the valley; but James Brindley, who was called in to advise the Duke, condemned the scheme and recom-

mended that the canal should be level throughout, being carried across the valley on an embankment and over the river Irwell itself by the famous Barton aqueduct, replaced a few years since, when the Manchester Ship Canal was cut, by the equally unique Barton swing bridge, which carries the Bridgewater Navigation over the Ship Canal. A second Bill having been promoted and passed in the year 1760, the works were commenced and opened to traffic on July 17, 1761, by the passage of the barge *Young Duke* over the Barton aqueduct, bound for Worsley. The incident is well portrayed in one of Ford Madox Brown's mural frescoes in the Manchester Town Hall.

Stretford, to the river Mersey near Runcorn and although in its length of 25·7 miles it crossed the river valleys of the Bollin and Mersey, it was level throughout, except in the last short length, near Runcorn, where there is a fall to the Mersey of 79 feet, in a series of locks distributed over a distance of rather less than three-quarters of a mile.

In 1766 Acts were obtained authorising the construction of the Trent and Mersey Canal and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, which, when completed, afforded inter-communication between the rivers Mersey, Humber, and Severn. The Trent and Mersey scheme had engaged Brindley's attention at various times since 1758, at first



ENTRANCE TO THE REGENT'S CANAL, LIMEHOUSE.

The Duke is seen standing upon a moored barge, whilst Brindley proffers him a somewhat large bottle of refreshment, a rather unkind reflection upon an engineer whose dining expenses were not infrequently less than sixpence per day. The barge *Young Duke* is hauled by two well-whipped mules and steered by a handsome Lancashire lass, seated astern, under the admiring eyes of her two chubby infants, who are securely tied on to the cabin roof ; a band on the bank discourses music of the fife and drum variety, and the customary processional dog is in course of rescue from the water.

The system was enlarged in 1762 by an ambitious extension from the Worsley-Manchester Canal near Longford Bridge, at

in an advisory capacity to Earl Gower and later in the joint interests of Earl Gower, the Duke of Bridgewater and other gentlemen. The promotion of the Bill met with much opposition, which did not terminate with the passing of the Act and numerous pamphleteers predicted, amongst other grievous consequences which would result from the construction and development of this and other such works, the decadence of inns and the loss of all interest in the breeding of horses, much the same as similar pessimistic writers argued sixty-five years later, that ladies and invalids would be unable to travel by the railway owing to the grievous lack of accommodation along the line, unless the directors of the railways chose to build inns

as commodious as those then existing, the patronage of which would be so scant and so infrequent that neither a good cellar nor a good larder would be at all maintained—an argument so well refuted by the splendid railway hotels now open at all the great termini.

The canal, the first sod of which was cut with some ceremony by Mr. Josiah Wedgwood, the great potter, in July, 1766, and which was opened for through traffic eleven years later, commences from a junction with the Bridgewater Canal at Preston-on-the-Hill, near Runcorn, and passing through the Cheshire salt districts, rises 395 feet to the summit level at Harecastle—on which length is the famous Harecastle Tunnel, 2,897 yards long—thence it roughly follows the course of the river Trent, which it crosses on no less than four aqueducts, to a point north-east of Lichfield, where it bends to the north-east, and crossing the river Dove by an aqueduct, which, with its approach embankments, is over a mile and a quarter long, it again takes a course roughly parallel to that of the Trent, till it falls into that river at a point near its confluence with the river Derwent, the fall from the summit level to this point being just under 290 feet. In its course it burrows through five hills, the total length of these tunnels, of which that at Harecastle is the most important, being just 18 yards short of three miles.

The benefits which it conferred upon the districts which it served, were as marked as those which Manchester derived from the construction of the Bridgewater Canals and the rates of carriage were reduced to a third, or, in some cases, a quarter of those which prevailed when the traffic was road-borne, and the connection of Liverpool with Manchester, Cheshire and the Midlands, contributed not a little to the material growth and prosperity of that part of the country, which ensued between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as the following table shows :—

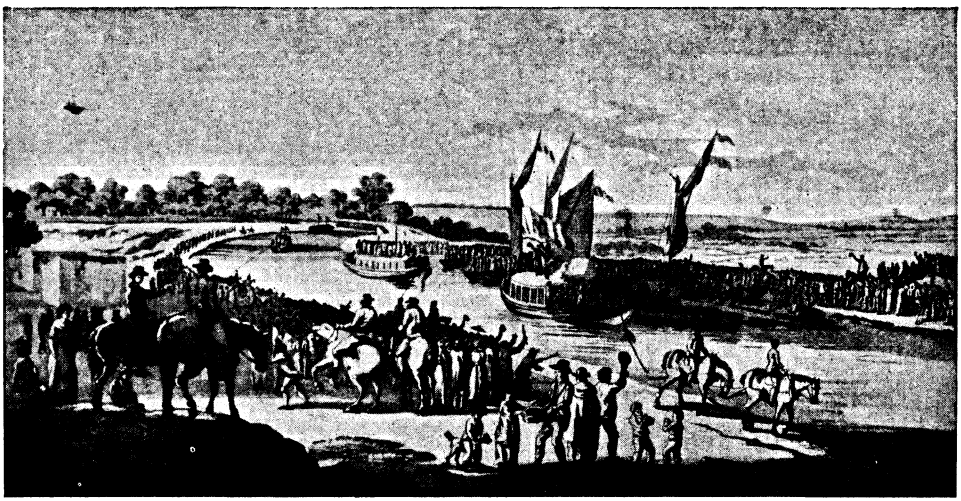
Year.	Population.	No. of Vessels.	Tonnage.
1647	1,500	24	500
1710	8,200	84	8,600
1801	77,700	5,060	456,700
1901	684,960	24,330	12,648,500

In 1768 the construction of the Coventry, Birmingham and Droitwich Canals was authorised and in the following year the Leeds and Liverpool Canal scheme received Parliamentary sanction ; but this canal was not opened to through traffic until 1816, although sections from Liverpool to Wigan and from Bingley to Bradford were opened in 1774, the latter length being equipped with the novelty of several series of locks in flight, one series in four groups, giving a fall near Bingley of about 120 feet.

Thereafter, the facilities which canals afforded were more and more appreciated by the community and various schemes were from time to time proposed. One of the most interesting through navigations was that between the rivers Thames and Severn, afforded by the Stroudwater Canal and the Thames and Severn Canal. The first of these canals, constructed under an Act passed in 1775, rises from the Severn at Framilode, through 13 locks in a distance of eight miles, to Stroud and the latter, authorised by Acts passed in 1783 and subsequent years, commences at the termination of the Stroudwater Canal, rises through 28 locks in a distance of about $7\frac{1}{8}$ miles to the summit level, which is over $8\frac{1}{8}$ miles long and upon which is the Sapperton Tunnel, $2\frac{1}{6}$ miles long, the second longest canal tunnel in this country ; it then descends for a further $13\frac{1}{2}$ miles through 16 locks to the river Thames at Inglesham.

The career of the Thames and Severn Canal has been most chequered. Opened in the presence of His Majesty King George III. in 1789, it enjoyed a very material prosperity until the opening of the Great Western Railway in 1841, from which date its income steadily declined until 1873, when it ceased to pay dividends upon its ordinary stock. In 1895 it was acquired by the Thames and Severn Canal Trust, who endeavoured to rehabilitate it and opened it to traffic for a brief period in 1899. Two years later it was acquired by the Gloucester County Council and opened to traffic by that authority in 1904.

The publication of the magnificent earnings of these new lines of transport, coupled with the limited opportunities then existing for the profitable investment of capital, gave rise to a keen desire to participate in this new means of fortune building, which was responded to by the promotion of canal schemes of greater or lesser merit ; and during the first half of the last decade of the eighteenth century a canal promotion mania, not greatly dissimilar from that which fifty years later overtook the railways, disturbed

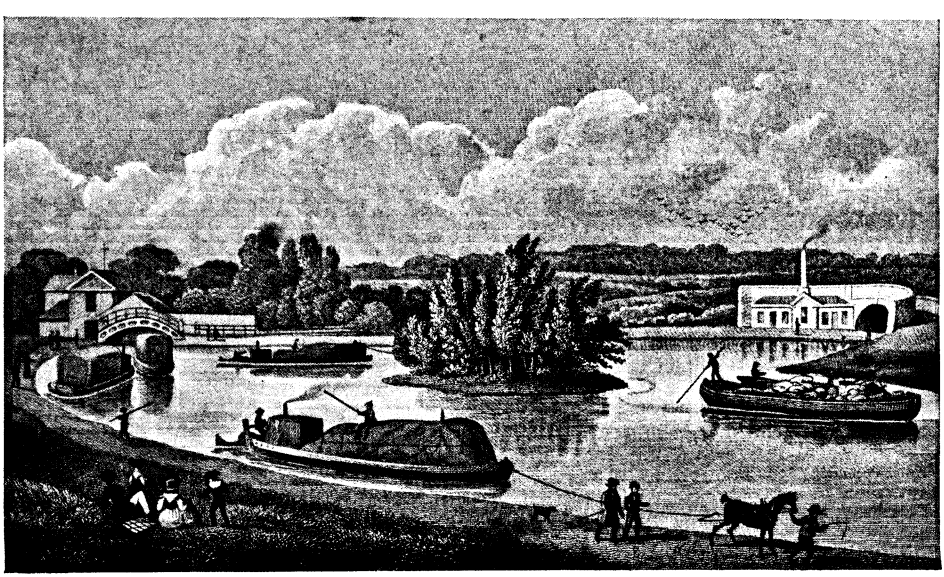


PADDINGTON CANAL.

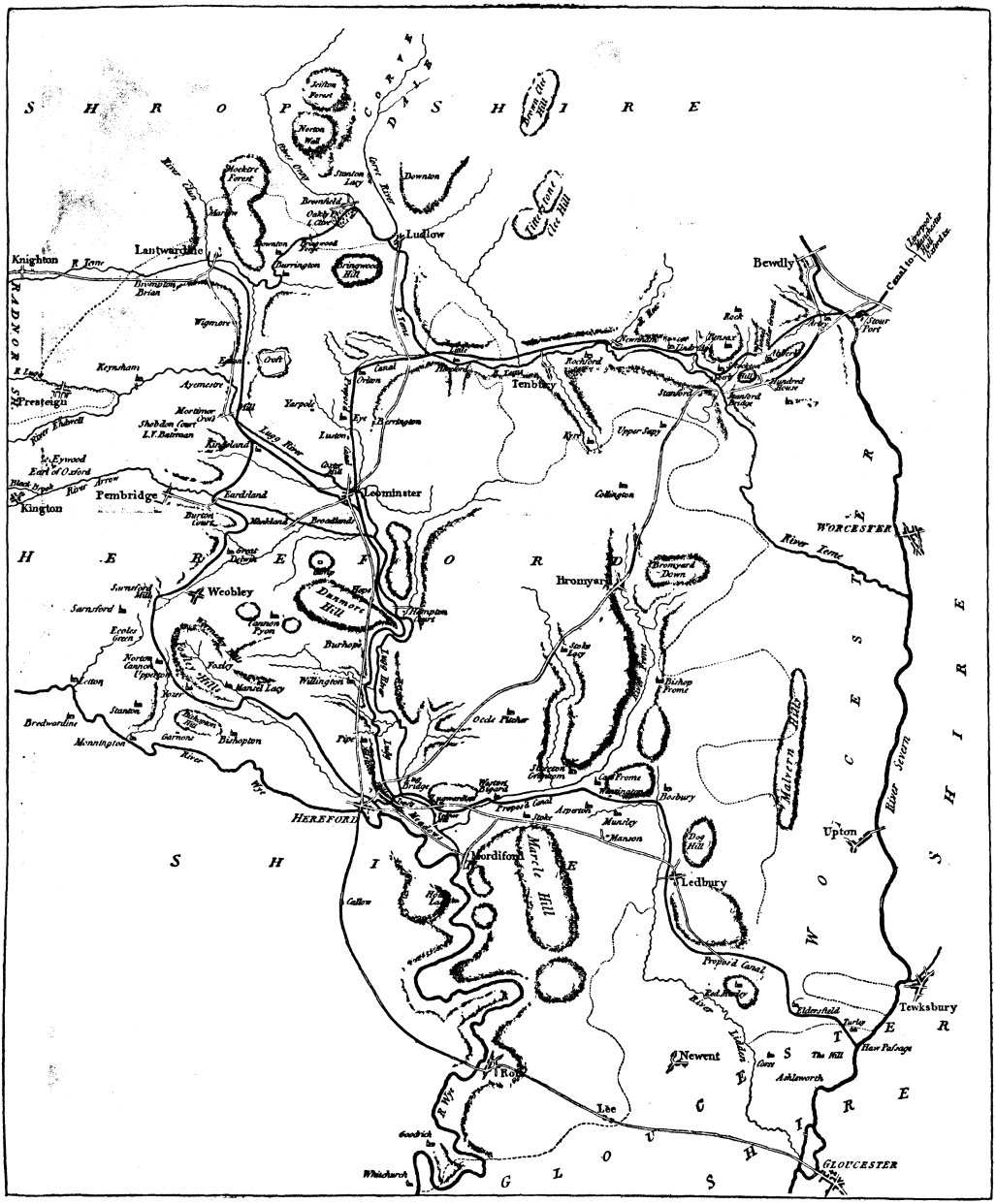
A view from the left of the first bridge at Paddington, on the 10th July, 1801.

and burdened the finances of the country. From 1790 to 1792 no less than thirty-six Acts were passed ; in the next two years forty-five Acts were passed and in all, 122 Acts were passed from 1790 to 1796.

As the early canals were constructed to stimulate and foster the dawning commercial activities of the country, it is probable that after the customary period of financial stagnation which has always succeeded a period of frenzied promotion, the expansion of the canal system would have continued to have developed with the growing trade ; but the commercial expansion would have been in no wise so great as it was in the middle and latter portions of the nineteenth century, had not other and more speedy modes of transport been developed ; and the advent of railways, together with the diversion of capital from canal promotion to railway construction and the later diversion of traffic to the newer system of transport offering greater facilities, combined not only to effectively check further canal development, but also to devitalise the existing system of over 4,000 miles.



JUNCTION OF THE REGENT'S CANAL AT PADDINGTON.

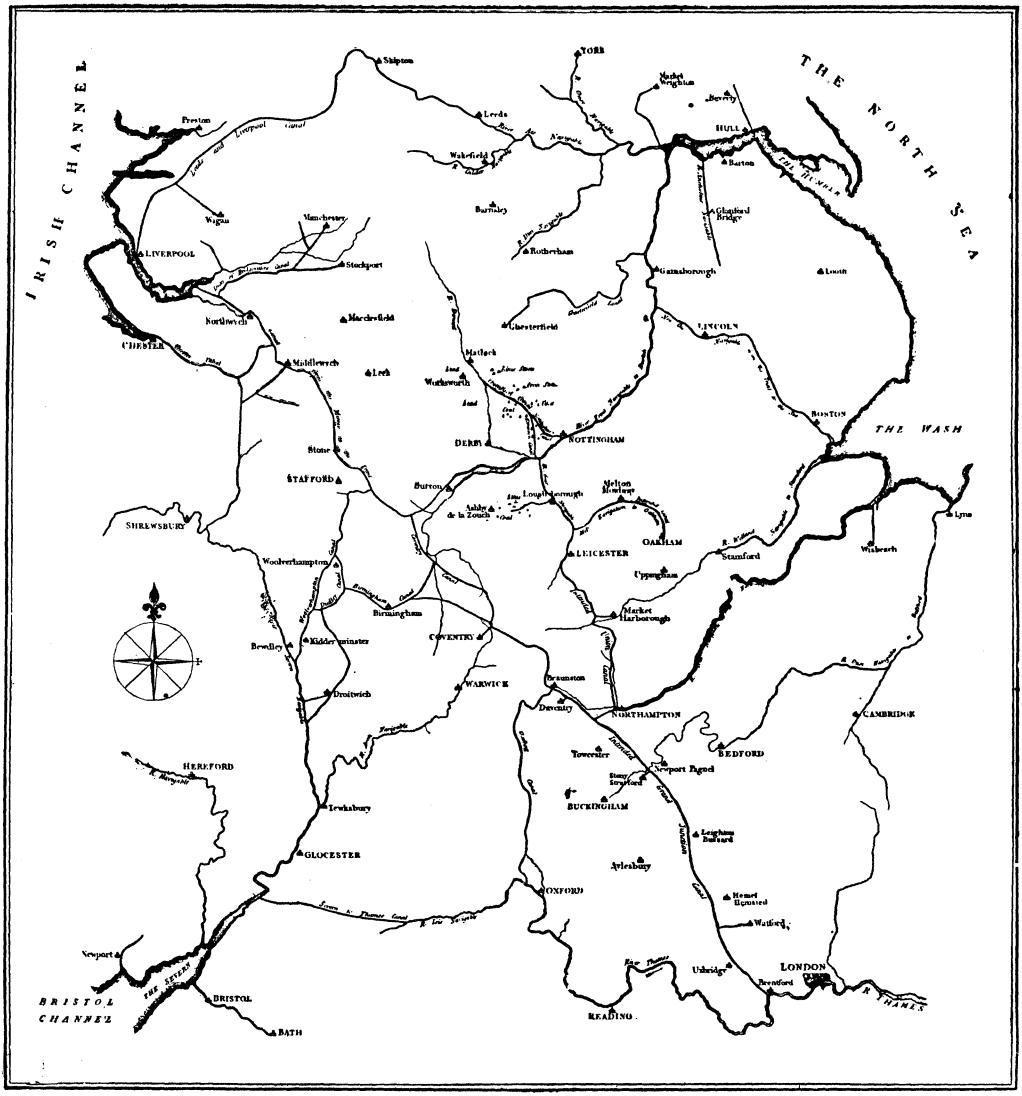


MAP PUBLISHED ABOUT 1780 TO SHOW A PROPOSED CANAL, SUBSEQUENTLY CONSTRUCTED IN PART, AS THE HEREFORD AND GLOUCESTER AND THE KINGTON LEOMINSTER AND STOURPORT CANALS.

Both now derelict and partly converted by the Great Western Railway Co. By a junction with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal at Stourport, which joined the Trent and Mersey Canal at Haywood Junction, access was to be afforded to the places mentioned in the top right-hand corner of the map.

Tramways for the transport of material over a track of flanged wooden beams are said to have been constructed as early as 1602 and in 1740 colliery tracks of cast-iron rails laid upon wooden sleepers were constructed; but the first railway Act was that passed in 1801, authorising the construction of the Surrey Iron Railway. In this, as in later Acts, the vehicles were to be hauled by men or horses and the traffic was to be solely and entirely a goods traffic.

In all these early railway Acts, the promoters proposed, as in the case of canals, merely to construct a route, over which, upon the payment of the necessary tolls, anyone was at liberty to haul his merchandise in his



"TRIA JUNCTA IN UNO."

A plan published about 1793 of the Leicestershire and Northamptonshire intended Union Canal. Described, at the time of its promotion, as "Showing its connection with the Grand Junction Canal at Northampton and with the River Trent by means of the Leicestershire Navigation; by which channels it will communicate with most of the present Inland Navigations in the Kingdom. The design of this canal is to connect the three rivers, the Nene, Thames, and Trent. At Northampton it is united with the Nene; by the channel of the Grand Junction Canal with the Thames; and by the Leicester Navigation with the Trent." Note.—Eighteen miles of this route, north of Foxton, has been developed as a part of the Leicester Section of the Grand Junction Canal, branching from the main line at Norton Junction; but the route, south of Market Harborough, was not followed and is occupied by the L.N.W. Railway, Northampton to Market Harborough line.

own wagons, but the arbitrariness of the gauge, the development of the locomotive engine and the obvious necessity of unified operation, led to such a specialisation in haulage, that the monopoly of conducting and maintaining the traffic became vested in the owners of the track. So that from the outset the railway companies were carriers, whilst but few of the canal companies had, and even at the present time have, any other interest than the collection of tolls on the traffic passing over their route.

The first railway—the Manchester and Liverpool Railway — promoted in direct opposition to the canals in 1822, was constructed, strangely enough, to afford cheaper freights in the very same district, in which, sixty-one years earlier, the first elements of the canal system of the country had been constructed for the same laudable reason.

This and succeeding railway promotions encountered the fiercest opposition from the then comparatively wealthy canal companies located in the areas which it was proposed that the railways should serve and the opposition not infrequently continued as a rate war, long after the passing of the Act and the opening of the line to traffic. In many cases the opposition only terminated with the purchase of the rival canal company, as in the case of most of the railway-owned canals of the present day ; in some cases, as in that of the London and North-Western Railway Company and the Birmingham Canal Company, the railway company guaranteed the interest upon the canal company's capital ; whilst in other cases, such as those of the Andover, Carlisle and Croydon Canals, the property was purchased by the railway company and the drained canal route was converted into a railway line.

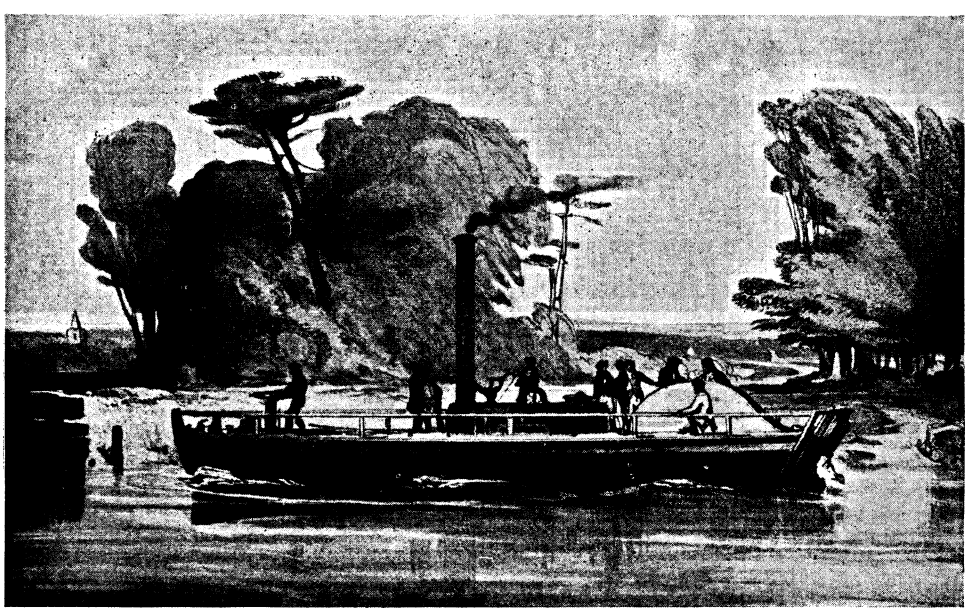
In the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, the numerous small railway companies, with short lengths of track running in every direction, were co-ordinated into lengthy through routes under one board of management, by which, irrespective of considerations of speed, etc., the railways gained an immeasurable superiority over the canals, in that a single through rate could be quoted for a considerable distance upon the railway, whilst upon the canal, a separate toll had to be paid to each small company over whose canal the traffic passed, or, in other words, one bargain settled the freight charges for any particular traffic by rail, whilst half-a-dozen or half-a-score such agreements were necessary before a through rate for the same distance by canal could be agreed upon.

The institution of the Railway Clearing House in 1842 afforded a further improvement in this direction and the provision of facilities for the rapid collection, distribution and storage of goods has exerted such an influence on the growth of trade, that the railways have increased as the following table shows :—

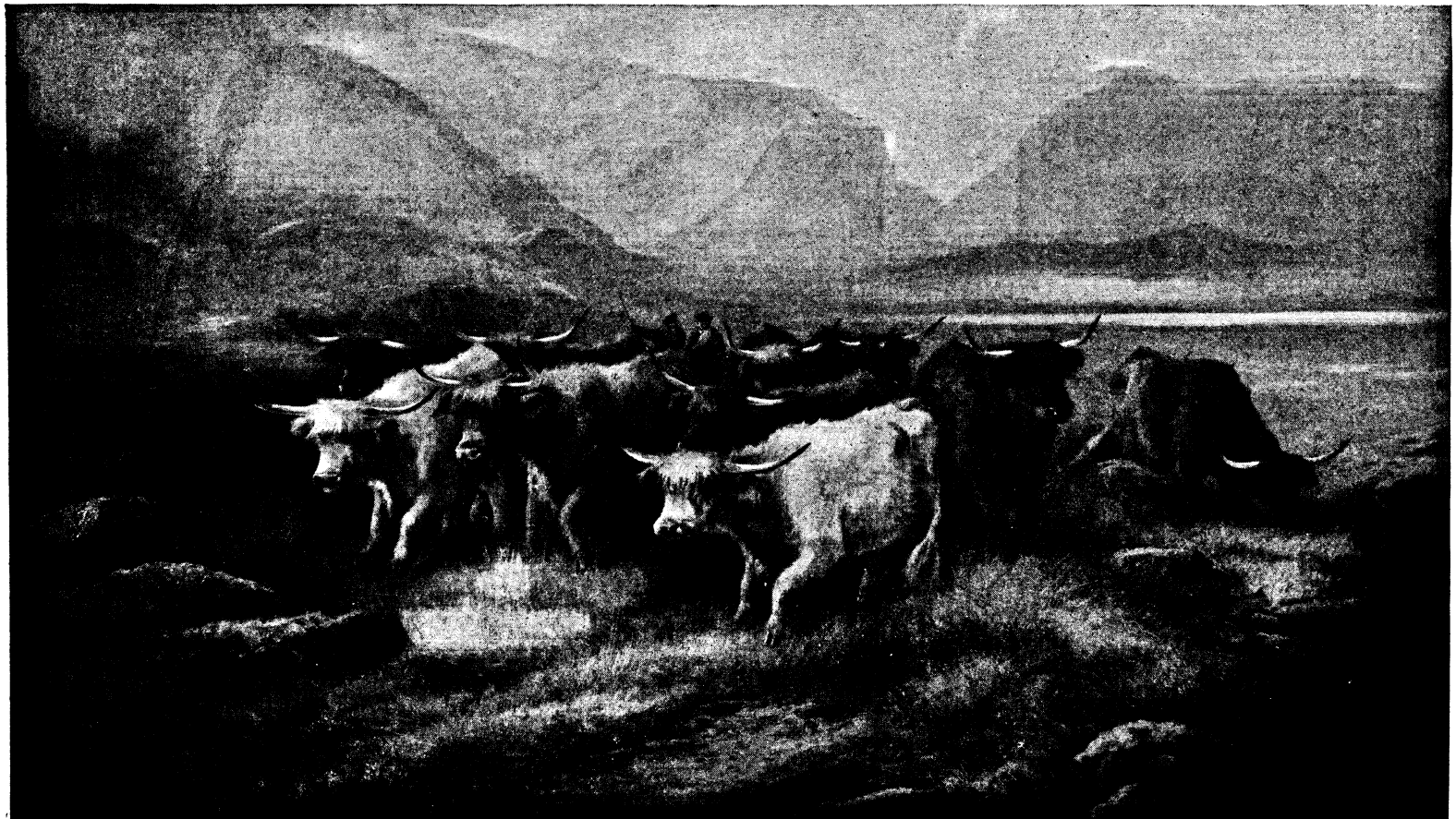
THE GROWTH OF RAILWAYS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IN THE PERIOD FROM 1850 to 1907.

	1850.	1907.
Paid-up capital in millions .	£240·3	£1,294·1
Traffic receipts in millions .	13·2	112·2
Thousands of miles open .	6·6	23·1
Passengers in millions . .	72·8	1,259·5

whilst, excepting for a few progressive canals, the canal system, as a whole, has not developed during the same period and some sections have become altogether derelict.



STERN WHEEL STEAMER "CHARLOTTE DUNDAS." BUILT FOR SERVICE ON THE FORTH AND CLYDE CANAL.
In 1802 two loaded vessels each of 70 tons were successfully towed by the "Charlotte Dundas" a distance of 19 miles on the Canal. The Canal owners, however, decided that any benefit which might accrue from the use of steam tugs would not compensate for the injury which would be done to the banks by the wash of the paddles, and therefore rejected the vessel.



"GOING SOUTH." BY JOHN MORRIS.

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THE THIRTY-SEVENTH MONTH.

By FRED M. WHITE.

THE flavour died out of James Costard's cigar. There was a taste in his mouth like that of ashes. It was not altogether, perhaps, the fault of the cigar, which was one usually retailed, if you are extravagant, at nine for the shilling. Costard was particular about his tobacco, but at the present moment he had something else to think about.

He sat there with his head on his hands gazing fixedly at the stage. His breath came with quick gasps through his short black teeth. A plentiful bead of moisture oozed out of his somewhat grimy features. Those strong, square thumbs were trembling, so were the brutal lines of the hard mouth. The stentorian noise of Costard's breathing roused the indignation of the lady behind, and the feathers in her large hat trembled in indignation. She wanted to know audibly why a certain class of people came to a music-'all merely for the sake of spoiling other people's pleasure. But Costard heard nothing of it, otherwise he would have been ready enough with repartee of a pungent and personal nature.

The atmosphere around him was thick and dank. Behind the halo of tobacco-smoke the stage loomed aggressively garish. A group of more or less competent actors were playing a boiled-down melodrama with all the intentness befitting their occupation. There was nothing particularly bright or fresh or original, not too much of the holding of the mirror up to Nature, so to speak; but, after all, the play is the thing, and it had gripped James Costard to the centre of his shrivelled soul. He turned to his companion, a man singularly like himself, who also for the time being had relaxed his grip upon his cigar and was regarding the stage with distended eyes.

"Joe," Costard said hoarsely, "I'll thank you to give me a pinch, old pard. Pinch me 'ard in the fleshy part of the thigh, if you'll be so good. I'll wake up presently and find it no more nor a bloomin' dream."

"Shut up!" Joe Slagg growled unsympathetically.

Costard shut up accordingly. After all, there seemed to be nothing in the stage performance to fill with fear the heart of a man who boasted, not without justice, that he didn't know what nerves were. To a certain extent, too, the story was commonplace enough. Here was the persecuted heroine, whose delicate husband was falsely accused of stealing the family diamonds from a hard-hearted uncle who had cast him adrift to die of consumption all alone in the hard-hearted world. Here, again, was the heroine compelled to toil as private secretary to the said hard-hearted uncle, so that she might find the means to keep the consumptive hero alive somewhere in the South of France. Apparently there was nothing to cause that unpleasant suggestion of dryness in the back of Jim Costard's throat, or to deprive Joe Slagg's tobacco of its exquisite flavour. And yet they were both following the performance as carefully and earnestly as if they were standing in the dock together charged with some heinous crime, and counsel for the Crown was unfolding some flawless indictment against them. There were others in the packed music-hall, either brutally indifferent, or critical, or damply tearful, according to their various temperaments. But in no case did the play grip a solitary spectator as it gripped those two friends and partners, James Costard and Joseph Slagg.

"I'd like to see the end of it," Costard muttered.

"So you will, you fool!" Slagg responded. "You've only got to wait another ten minutes. Not but what it's queer, as I own freely. Why, it's exactly the same as it was that night three years ago——"

It was fortunate, perhaps, that the lady in the liberal hat behind appealed once again for silence. Slagg's reminiscences might have become dangerous, they might have even proved interesting to any plain-clothes police officer in the immediate vicinity. But, as a matter of fact, neither of the partners

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was in the least conscious of what was going on around them. They sat there breathless and perspiring, waiting with an excitement akin to pain for the development of the story.

It was reaching the acute stage now. In ten minutes more, at the outside, they would know the best or worst of it. And then, just as the heroine was taxing her maid with an act of perfidy which had admitted a predatory lover to the house of sorrows, a thin curl of blue smoke rose from the wings, a tiny tongue of flame zigzagged up the prompt flat—then, as if by magic, the whole thing burst into a dazzling blaze, and a thick, acrid smoke hid the stage from view. For the fraction of a second there was a dead silence, then the sound of a woman screaming shrilly in the gallery, and a second later the trampling rush of many feet in the direction of the exits. It was singular, perhaps, that the only people who kept their heads in that headlong stream were Costard and his partner. It was they who rose with one accord, uttering hoarse commands and shrieking lurid jibes and crimson insults. It was they who contrived to beat some spark and semblance of manhood into the cowards who were fighting there, heedless of women and children, for their own safety. Then, as the fireproof curtain came down and the spirals of smoke were whirled upwards, something like order was restored. The women ceased to cry and scream, the shrill treble of childish voices died away. From behind the fireproof curtain could be heard the steady thud-thud of a manual engine, the hiss of water on flame resounded through the emptying theatre.

They were all outside presently, a white-faced mob talking in whispers, a handful of helmeted policemen, a busy doctor here and there, a few ominous-looking ambulances. Costard and Slagg pushed their way through the huddled sheep and turned with common accord into a public-house not far off. They nodded to one another. It seemed to each that this was the time for heroic measures.

"A large brandy, with just a spot of water," Costard suggested tentatively, "that's mine."

"You were always one to think of things," Slagg coincided.

The necessary refreshment was procured and supplemented before Costard began to speak. He produced a fresh cigar and lighted it deliberately.

"Well, what do you think of it?" he asked.

"I dunno," Slagg replied. "My mind's all of a whirl, it is. It ain't the long arm of coincidence, I suppose?"

"What's that?" Costard asked suspiciously.

"Well, it's something what I 'eard in a play years ago. Sort of bad luck—you know what I mean. You think everything's goin' right, when all of a sudden somebody turns up as you thought was dead, or the night watchman's on the premises when you think as 'e's takin' 'is 'olidays. Just the same what 'appened in the play I'm talkin' about. Just as everything was goin' right and 'e was goin' to lead a honest life, up turns somebody as 'e couldn't out without gettin' 'is neck stretched, and 'e says, says 'e, 'The long arm of coincidence is reached for me.' Seems to have reached for us, too, don't it?"

Costard nodded moodily.

"That's about it," he grunted. "Three years ago it is since we got 'old of them stones at Darchester Terrace. Three years ago it is since them sparklers came into our 'ands in the way of business. You remember 'ow it 'appened, don't you?"

"Why, certainly," Slagg replied. "Old gent livin' more or less alone with three servants in Darchester Terrace. 'E ain't got much money, but 'e's got some family diamonds, what possesses what those newspapers call 'istoric interest, and one of them is engraved. We makes up our minds as we're goin' to 'ave them, and you, bein' a better-looking man than me, goes along, and in a short time you manages to win the affections of a nice-looking young female as possesses more beauty than common-sense——"

"'Ere, 'old 'ard," Costard interrupted. "Don't forget you're talkin' of the lidy who 'as the honour to be my missus."

"I'd forgotten," Slagg said penitently. "And it's true, all the same. Well, you gets into the 'ouse, and you gets the stones, never knowin' for the moment as 'ow the old man 'as a nephew about the place. And I don't say it's your fault 'as the nephew was found subsequently lyin' at the bottom of the stairs, and that, so to speak, 'e's never been the same man since. Seein' as you'd got the stones in your pocket, and seein' as what your personal safety was in danger, you couldn't do nothing less than out 'im, though I don't 'old with violence myself. I didn't ask no questions at the time; I never asked what became of them stones——"

"I've got 'em now," Costard said hoarsely.

"Never dared to part with 'em. And why? Because I was watched all the time; night and day those detectives had their eye upon me. Why, they even made a pretence of searching my room when my back was turned, and shammed that they was thieves all the time. For the best part of a year I couldn't move without bein' followed; not that it mattered, neither. 'Ow was the police to know that the very next night we was in the 'ouse of that old miser at Notting Hill, what we found dead in his bed? I've 'ad a bit of luck in my time, Joe, but nothin' like that. Why, there the poor old beggar lay dead, and all we 'ad to do was to 'elp ourselves to his money and securities; and when they found 'im afterwards, why, there was nothing to be said or done except bury 'im. They couldn't find no relative and they couldn't find no friends. And they comes to the natural conclusion that he couldn't have no money, and there we were on velvet, with a matter of ten thousand pounds between us, and not a soul the wiser."

Slagg chuckled greasily.

"And then we sets up in partnership, coal and corn dealers and general contractors. We turns our back upon a life of crime, and now we're honoured and respected and makin' more money than whatever we did on the cross. Why, bless you, with any luck, we shall be members of the Board of Guardians yet."

"Not me," Costard said contemptuously. "No Board of Guardians for me. It pays us a sight better to contract with 'em for coal and supplies. But that's business. That's the way to become honoured and respected, and perhaps finish up with a knighthood. But we're wandering from the point, as the newspaper chaps say. What about the long arm of coincidence? And what about the play we've been watching to-night? 'Ere we are with the old story set out. Why, the very 'set' is a copy of the room in Darchester Terrace, the same diamonds, 'ere's the same persecuted 'eroine secretly married to the old man's nephew, 'ere's the 'eroine tumbling to the fact that the maid what she trusts so implicitly is at the bottom of the 'ole business. I don't like it, Joe. I don't like it a bit. Somebody knows all about it, and somebody's put it all into a play. And somebody'll be coming along to you one of these days doin' a little bit of blackmail. And you know what blackmail is."

Slagg grinned uncomfortably.

"I did it once," he muttered, "but it didn't pay. Leastways, it didn't pay the second time. I shouldn't have expected as 'ow such a slim-lookin', soft-spoken chap could 'ave been so 'andy with 'is fists. Knocked me about something cruel, he did. But you're quite right, mate, that there blackmail is a good business when you've got something to go on. And if these people start about us, we'll have nothing left in twelve months' time. But perhaps you're only frightenin' yourself unnecessarily. P'raps that long arm of coincidence——"

"Long arm be 'anged!" Costard growled. "'Ow long is it since that little business at Darchester Terrace?"

"Three years," Slagg said promptly, "and a month."

"Very well, then, just look at your programme for to-night's show. Look at your programme and tell me what's the name of that 'ere play as we see this evenin'."

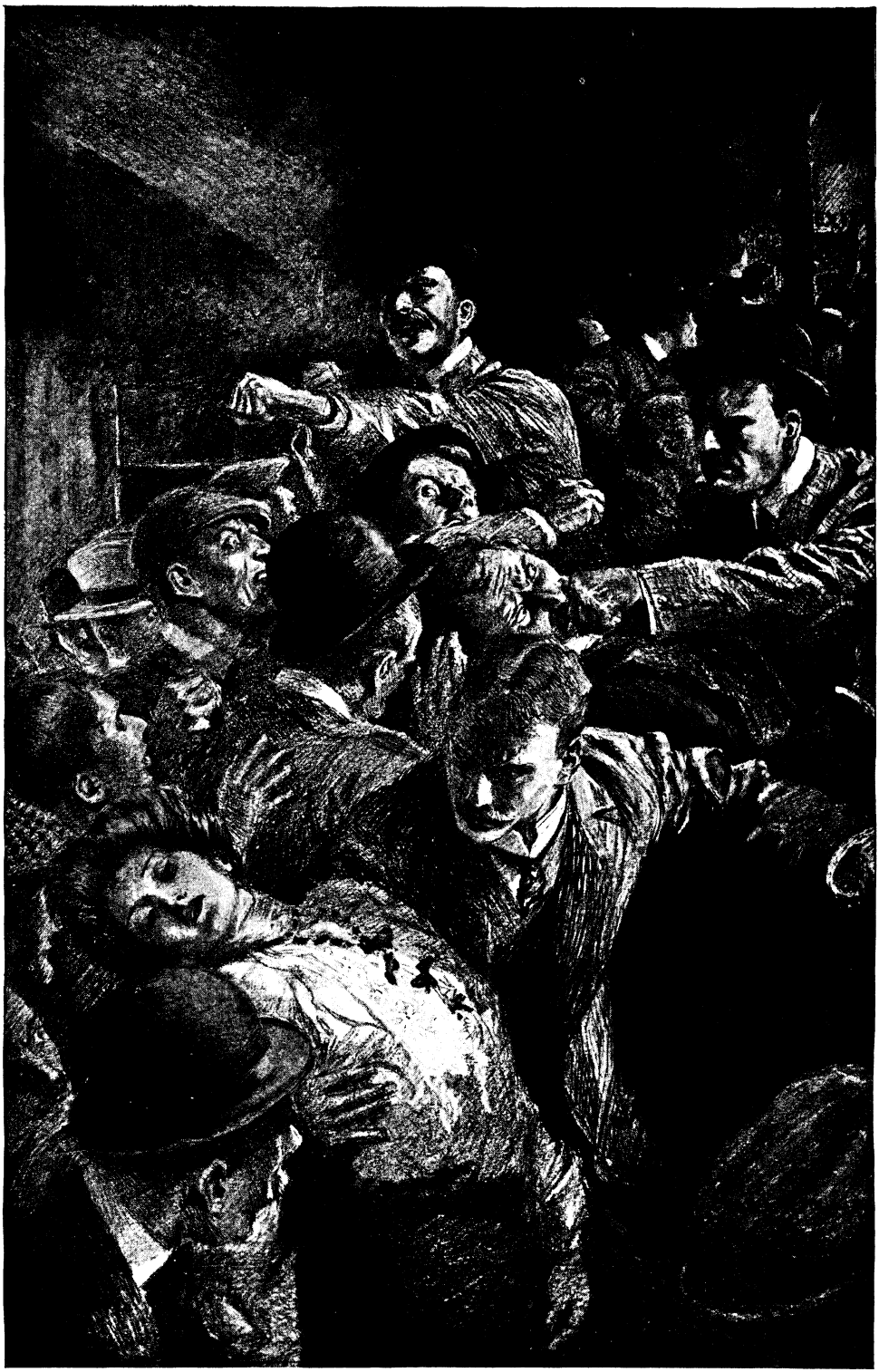
Slagg took the programme from his pocket and unfolded it.

"Whew!" he exclaimed. "It's called 'The Thirty-Seventh Month,' and this *is* the thirty-seventh month. You're quite right, mate. This thing means blackmail. Makes me feel cold up and down my spine. And yet I dunno. Seems to me as we should have been better off if we'd seen the end of the play. Been able to grip the situation, p'raps. And now it'll probably be months before the music-'all will be fit for another audience. And meanwhile——"

"Ah, meanwhile," Costard said ruminatively. "That's the point of the 'ole thing, Joe. What we've got to find out is who wrote that little play, and all about 'im. I dare say that in the fire to-night the book of the play will be destroyed. But the cove what wrote it will certainly 'ave a copy, and we've got to find out who 'e is. We've got to make him safe. We've got, if necessary, to take steps to induce him——"

Costard paused significantly; for a respectable tradesman and a man of some substance, his expression was decidedly murderous. The man was frightened, too; of that there could be no question. His hard, strong mouth was twitching; thin beads of perspiration trickled down his face, carrying channels of dirt with them. For some little time the two men sat moodily sipping their brandy, until a third man came in and nodded as he passed their table.

"This is a bit of luck," Slagg murmured. "That's Tom Carver, stage carpenter at the music-'all, 'e is. I dare say 'e can give us a bit of information. Let's ask 'im over 'ere and stand 'im a drink."



"It was they who contrived to beat some spark and semblance of manhood into the cowards who were fighting there."

The stage carpenter was nothing loth, and over his refreshment he had certain information to impart. The damage done to the stage had been considerable, most of the property had been burnt out, and there was no likelihood that the music-hall would open its doors again for at least two months.

"It's a pity," Costard said musingly. "It's 'ard on the artistes, and it's 'ard on those what gets a livin' by writin' them plays. Pretty little thing, that, you put up to-night. New author, ain't he? What's 'is name?"

"Party of the name of Braybrooke," the carpenter explained. "I don't know him myself. 'E's one of them amateurs, I'm told. 'E'll 'ave to write that play all over again now. All the manuscript was burnt—in fact, there's precious little left except what happened to be in the manager's safe. But I dare say 'e's got a copy."

Costard and Slagg exchanged glances.

"'Appen to know where 'e lives?" the latter asked.

"Matter of fact," the stage carpenter went on, "I've got a letter to post to 'im in my pocket. Given me by the manager this evenin', it was. 'Mr. George Braybrooke, 15, Bodington Road, Kensington.' P'raps you wouldn't mind slipping it into the post for me. No, I won't 'ave another, now. I must get back to the theatre. P'raps I shall manage to get 'ome by daylight with any luck."

The speaker rose reluctantly and departed, leaving the letter on the table. Without wasting further words, Costard called for a Post Office Directory. The volume in question proved to be an old one, and contained no such address as Bodington Road in the Kensington postal district.

"More County Council interferences," Costard growled. "Depend upon it, they've been changin' the name of the street. Let's go round to the post-office and 'ave a squint at an up-to-date volume."

They found what they wanted presently, and Costard fluttered over the name in the road. A queer expression came over his face as he laid his dirty thumb on the open page.

"'Ere, this long arm of coincidence of yours seems to be busy," he said. "'Ere we are right enough. Bodington Road, Kensington, lately known as Darchester Terrace, and the number is 15, and it's the same 'ouse where we 'ad the little adventure over the diamonds three years ago. Good old coincidence! Why, this is like some of them stories you read in the Sunday papers. What luck!"

"Don't see it," Slagg growled uneasily. "Makes it all the worse, don't it? I'd give five pounds to know 'ow this play ended. Five pounds! I'd give fifty."

Costard dragged his companion to the comparative seclusion of the street. He seemed easier in his mind now.

"You're goin' to know," he said. "You must keep your money in your pocket. Do you suppose the same people are still in that 'ouse? Not they. Just consider the look of it. It's a risk, Joe, that's what it is, a risk, and I'm goin' to take it. For one night only, as they say on the concert bill, I'm goin' to depart from the strict paths of virtue. I'm goin' to do a little bit of burglary again. Oh, it's safe enough. Why, I remember that 'ouse as well now as if I'd only been there last week. And I'm going to find that play, and I'm goin' to read it for myself, and I'm goin' to act accordingly. None of your blackmailin' for me. I'll know what to do when the time comes."

"Better wait," Slagg suggested.

"Not me," Costard said truculently. "Forewarned is forearmed. Besides, I'm curious to see this Mr. George Braybrooke. 'E knows a sight too much for me. 'E knows all about it, and 'e's poor, of course."

"'Ow do you know that?" Slagg asked.

Costard looked contemptuously at the speaker.

"'Ow do I know?" he asked. "Why, ain't all those writer fellers poor. Look at Chatterton and Keats and forty more of 'em; they never 'ave a penny to bless themselves with. Now, you come round to-morrow night about seven o'clock, when the missus is out, and we'll settle this little matter."

"All right," Slagg said with an air of reluctance. "I suppose I must. Good night, James, and pleasant dreams."

II.

JAMES COSTARD sat before the fire in his sitting-room, an unusual prey to unusually gloomy thoughts. Had he been a man of culture, he would possibly have called himself an optimist; as it was, he seldom suffered from what he would have called the "'ump." But this was one of those rare occasions, for his glass of peculiarly strident whisky stood untasted by his side, a mass of documents, relating to an exceedingly profitable and therefore particularly rascally contract, were unheeded.

In a curious way he was proud of his new

respectability. He was proud of his broadcloth suit, of his heavy gold watch-chain and diamond ring. He was proud of his house and his wife and her furs. He was proud, too, to find better and honester men than himself addressing him as "sir" and taking off their hats to him, and now he stood to lose everything.

The venture seemed safe enough. Mrs. Costard had retired to bed and would be fast asleep by this time. With any luck, Costard would be back home again in a couple of hours, and nobody any the wiser as to the result of his little trip. It would be no difficult matter, either, to procure the necessary tools. The coast had been carefully surveyed, and the time for action had arrived.

Costard let himself quietly out of the house and closed the door behind him. For the first time in his life he felt a certain dryness in his throat and a peculiar sensation in the region of his heart. A year or two ago these distressing symptoms would not have manifested themselves. If he had had no friends, he had, at any rate, no enemies, and in those days James Costard had no position to forfeit. But now things were different entirely. He would not like to admit that he was afraid, but it was a fact, all the same.

He came at length to Bodington Road, late Darchester Terrace, and stood there for a minute or two, to make sure that no inquisitive policeman was lingering in the neighbourhood. The street appeared to be absolutely quiet, most of the houses were now discreetly draped in darkness, there was nothing to be seen but an adventurous cat as Costard stole down the area of No. 15. He paused just for a moment to draw a pair of indiarubber overalls over his square-toed, respectable boots; he wanted no dark lantern, and as to the premises, he remembered them perfectly. His bump of locality amounted almost to genius, which was, perhaps, the chief cause why he had never yet actually come within the grip of the law. With a thin-bladed knife he pushed back the catch of the front kitchen window, and a moment later he was in the house.

It was all familiar enough now; his courage was coming back to him, a sense of elation filled him, much as it might have filled a reformed drunkard indulging, after the lapse of time, in a glass of spirits. He felt his way up the stairs, gliding along in the black, velvety darkness until he reached the hall

He stopped there to listen, but no sound broke the stillness of the house save the lazy ticking of the grandfather's clock somewhere on the first landing. The atmosphere was warm and clinging and familiar—not a stuffy atmosphere, but a clear and slightly fragrant one that Costard closely associated with old silver and jewels and watches of price. The very scent of it brought vividly back the recollection of more than one brilliantly successful midnight raid. So to speak, it was like the smell of the battle to the war-horse. All Costard's smug respectability dropped from his shoulders now. It would go hard, he told himself, if he did not take toll as recompense for all his trouble.

Not that he forgot his errand. He would have to look for something in the shape of a study where this mysterious George Braybrooke did his literary work. Costard had been reading the magazines of recent years. He had got to know something of the habits of the literary man from the perusal of more or less veracious illustrated interviews with writers of mark. Therefore, he did not expect to find himself confronted with any serious obstacle—such, for instance, as a fireproof safe. A brief investigation of the ground apartments with the aid of an electric torch showed him that he would have to look further afield. There was danger here, as he told himself, creeping up to the second floor.

The sweat was running down his face now as he cautiously tried one room after another. They were bedrooms, for the most part unoccupied, and there at last, at the end of a little corridor by the side of the bathroom, was the very thing he was looking for.

"Not the slightest doubt about it," Costard told himself. Here was a big table littered with papers and proofs, on the opposite side was an American roll-top desk with the flap pulled back. The room was lined with books. On the table stood an electric lamp connected by a flex to a wall plug. Undoubtedly Costard's luck was in now. Beyond any question he was in Mr. George Braybrooke's library. He could not quite understand the presence there of a hat and jacket, indicative of the fact that somewhere in the house was a lady who at that moment was in deep mourning. But this, though it might not have been indifferent to a Sherlock Holmes, was nothing to James Costard. It was a mere detail outside his province. What he had to do now, if possible, was to find the complete manuscript of "The Thirty-Seventh Month," and read it to the end.

It was not such an easy matter as he had expected, but presently he found it. The manuscript was a rough copy, certainly, but it happened to be typed, and not for the first time in his career James Costard had to bless modern skill and modern advancement.

Yes, here it was, right enough. He hastily ran his eye over the first few pages, with which he was already familiar. He came at length to that portion of the play which had been interrupted by the unfortunate fire at the theatre, and the further Costard read the more frightened and bewildered did he become.

"It's all here," he muttered to himself as he wiped the gathering beads from his forehead. "Every bit of it. And what's more, the writer of this stuff knows the part that my missus took in the business. And 'ow did 'e know I was fool enough to write Mary a letter? I told her to destroy it. . . Ah, she seems to have done so . . . And left a piece of it on the study floor. This very same study as I'm in now, too. Oh, this is worse than I anticipated! This 'ere Braybrooke seems to know everything—every mortal thing, and no bloomin' error about it. I should like to see that chap, I should like to see him very much indeed. I wonder what 'e's like? I wonder if 'e's a cove what would be easily frightened! I wonder if I could manage to lure him down my way some night—but, no, a chap as clever as that wouldn't be a blithering fool. I'd give a 'undred pounds to know what 'is little game is. I'd give a trifle to know 'ow it was that the business of those diamonds never got into the papers. But what's the use of talkin' like this? Anyway, it couldn't be worse. And that chap's goin' to bide his time like they do in the story books. 'E'll wait till I've got more money. 'E'll wait till I'm Sir James Costard or something of that sort, and then 'e'll come along asking for ten thousand pounds, bold as brass. And I'll have to pay it, too. I only wish I'd got 'im 'ere!"

There was no doubt as to the sincerity of Costard's desire. At the moment he was ready for anything. He had raised his voice unconsciously. So absorbed was he in his work, with the aid of the electric torch, that he heard nothing at all of a sudden creaking on the stairs outside. He did not seem to realise for a full minute that the reading-lamp on the table had suddenly burst into flame, or that the two brackets over the fireplace were also flooding the room with a soft yellow radiance.

When he did so, a great and overwhelming fear gripped Costard by the heart and held him there. Like most of the class, he was not fond of light except in connection with a public-house or a music-hall. He stood there trembling and sweating in a ludicrous state of terror, and glancing apprehensively in the direction of the door, as if he feared the advent of some tremendous presence. He regretted that he had not brought his revolver with him, but profound cogitation had resulted in the abandonment of any policy of that kind. He stood there breathing heavily, he saw the door swing back, and then there entered a tall, slender girl dressed from head to foot in the deepest mourning.

She had a singularly beautiful and refined face, none the less beautiful and refined because it had traces of considerable sorrow and suffering. But, all the same, the blue eyes were quite steady, and the little red mouth was absolutely firm.

"What are you doing here?" the girl asked.

For the moment Costard's repartee failed him. He had nothing to say, no ingenious argument to advance to account for his presence in a strange house at one o'clock in the morning. Much cleverer individuals than Costard would have found themselves at a loss for an argument in similar circumstances.

"What's that got to do with you?" he growled.

It was a futile sort of question, but it was the best that Costard could put on the spur of the moment.

"This is my house," the girl explained. "I should like to know what this conduct means."

Costard was understood to say that he was looking for a gentleman named Braybrooke. He ventured to remark that he had found the front door open, and seeing that he himself and Mr. George Braybrooke were on friendly, not to say affectionate, terms——"

"But this is absurd," said the girl, with a slight suggestion of a smile. "I am George Braybrooke—at least, that is the name I adopt for my literary work."

Costard caught his lip between his teeth, and this successfully strangled a curse of bitter disappointment.

"You wrote that little piece called 'The Thirty-Seventh Month'?" he exclaimed. "Why—why—why——"

"You have seen it?" the girl asked quietly.



"'What are you doing here?' the girl asked."

"Yes, I have seen it," the discomfited Costard said. "And that is why—but you can understand."

Once more the girl smiled strangely.

"I think I do," she said. "Do you happen, for instance, to be a married man? Oh, yes, I see you are. Now, shall we assume that your wife's Christian name is Mary. I am right again, I presume. Let me guess again, and suggest that her name was Mary Winslow."

Costard wiped his heated forehead. The girl stood looking at him out of the depths of her blue eyes as if she were trying to read his inward thoughts.

"This is remarkable," she went on, "most remarkable. Do you know that for the last two years or more I have been engaged as private secretary to an uncle of mine, who, by the way, is dead now—in fact, we buried him a fortnight ago, and the contents of this house belong to me. I stayed on here as secretary to my uncle because I happen to have an invalid husband whose state of health until quite recently has necessitated his living in the South of France. But you know all that, don't you?"

"I've seen something like it," Costard said earnestly. "I've seen something like it in that little play of yours."

"Of course. That is precisely why you are here this evening. But we will come to that presently. I made that story into a little stage play because it struck me it had strong dramatic possibilities. I will ask your opinion presently, seeing that you have witnessed the play as far as Fate allowed it to go. The cause of my husband's unfortunate state of health lies in the fact that he was nearly murdered three years ago by a ruffian who came here in search of some diamonds which belonged to my uncle. The diamonds disappeared, and my uncle took it into his head to believe that my husband

stole them. In the face of facts, it was a ridiculous assumption, but there is no accounting for the vagaries of an old man in his second childhood. Much as I disliked it, I remained with my uncle so that I could keep my husband alive. But *I* guessed where the diamonds were. I dare say you wonder why the police were never put on the track of the mystery; but, then, you see, my maid, Mary Winslow, was a great favourite of mine—she was my foster-sister, and on one occasion she saved my life. It is not for me to judge her, it is not for me to wonder that a girl like herself should give her heart to a man—well, like you, for instance. But it was all in the play. I needn't tell you any more about it, because I see you have already read it for yourself. You feared that someone who had got possession of your secret might blackmail you, and you wanted to see exactly how matters stood. Well, they say that truth is stranger than fiction."

"But how did you guess?" Costard stammered.

"I don't guess," the girl said. "I *know*. That is one of the advantages of possessing an artistic temperament. And so you are Mary Winslow's husband; you are the man who stole my uncle's jewels; you are the man who was nearly responsible for my husband's death three years ago. You don't look like a burglar now, you look like a man who is testing the virtues of respectability. And so you thought that I would blackmail you?"

"Lots of people would," Costard said defiantly.

"Very likely. Perhaps I may yet. It is entirely in your hands. There was no fuss made over the outrage I allude to, it never got into the papers, but the police had the matter in hand all the same. And I could have told them a deal more than I did, only I thought of the foster-sister of whom I was so fond, and I held my tongue. But I don't think you ever disposed of those diamonds—at least, the police said that the man they suspected, which, of course, was you, had not dared to make the attempt. Now, I have only to close the door and lock you in, and then——"

"'Ow much?" Costard said hoarsely. "Name your price."

"Oh, I am going to. My price is the diamonds which you have been unable to dispose of. Come, they are of no use to you, and they will make all the difference in the world to my husband and myself. Turn out your pockets. Give me your watch and chain and notebook. Put them on the table and leave them here, and I will wait till you return with the stones. I think it is a fair bargain."

Very slowly Costard did as he was directed. He breathed hoarsely, and his face shone in the lamplight.

"It's only fair," he muttered, "and I'll do it. And just you wait 'ere an hour and I'll be back again."

"I am sure of that," the girl said significantly. "And now go. If you lose no time, my husband and I will be able to catch the morning express to Paris to-morrow."

REVEILLE.

A BIRD in the silver dawn
Was singing, singing to me,
It sang so shrill, so sweet
In the little wood by the sea.

The long, low wash of the wave,
The quiet face of the sun,
The cool, salt breath of the air,
Seemed silence and song made one.

The ripples sighed at my feet
On the shining sands where I stood,
But the leaves were still on the trees
While the robin sang in the wood.

In the green ash-grove by the sea
Sweet was the song that I heard,
For Hope and Courage and Joy
Woke at the voice of the bird.

ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON.



"DECLINED WITH THANKS."

SHE: I am afraid Jack will never be a success as a literary man.
HE: What makes you think that?
SHE: Well, I submitted his love letters to six publishers, and they all refused them.

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

A CUT DIRECT.

THE gracious and delightful person, a miniature brunette with wonderful eyes, who had been my companion during the morning's ramble beside the river, had suddenly become a little Fury. It was so unexpected and bewildering that for a moment or two I could only stare at her in astonishment. Two minutes earlier, radiant as the new penny she had drawn from her satchel, she had gone into the toyshop to buy another tiny doll for the collection she is dressing to represent the characters in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," —yesterday it was a flaxen-haired Eva—while I remained outside, marvelling at the fatuity of the doggerel on the post-cards in the windows. Bad verse always fascinates me, and I was so lost in the wilderness of nonsense that it took several violent tugs to recall me to my distressed daughter.

"Daddy, daddy, he won't look at me!"

More vicious tugs at my sleeve and the cry was repeated. Awakened at last, I glanced down and met a flushed, angry little face and tearful eyes. The new doll's face had been dusty, the dust had come off on tiny fingers, and a long, black, wet smudge lay across one cheek. "He won't even look at me!" the cry came once more with almost agonised rage. The wet eyes were blazing now.

"Who won't look at you, darling?"

"Alan; it's Alan!" Then, unconsciously, Elsa gave me the expected key to the mystery. "He's with another boy."

The gallant Alan is nine. He looks very magnificent in his uniform as one of Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts, and Elsa's six-year-old heart is his utterly. But although in the secrecy of the nursery or of the garden the young warrior may be willing enough to be agreeable to a mere girl, it is another matter when he is on his way home from drill, discussing high themes with his *Achates*. This subtlety, however, is beyond Elsa. All she knew, poor little faithful soul, was the first sting of the world's treachery.

"Where is the rascal?" I asked.

"He's gone along there under the railway bridge."

We walked on silently for a little. I knew that comfort or explanation would be futile, if not criminal, and that it would be best to leave the wound to the healing of time. There was no sniffing, only an occasional reiteration of the cry: "I spoke to him and he wouldn't even *look* at me."

The villain and his accomplice were nowhere to be seen. I looked about for them, for I had a mind, if possible, to put things right between Alan and my daughter. Too well I understood his cruelty, and even an old boy, if he has any



"THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING."

"HULLO! Are those mushrooms you've found, my little man?"

"I dunno. You can eat 'em and see, if you like!"

memories of youth worth having, must admit that the situation was trying. If Alan's eyes are true prophets, there is a day in store for him when he will not ignore womankind, and if they refuse to speak to him, he will have a bad night, poor boy. But, happily, he knows none of these things. He is a fine, manly little fellow, and all the better that he is so true to the instincts of the boy. Still, for the sake of Elsa's faith in mankind, I wished that the situation could be saved, and I intended that it should be, if only the other parties to the case would reappear.

Suddenly, as if from the *Ewigkeit*, they did. There is nothing to compare with the miraculous dodging course of two small boys. A dog in a fair runs them a very bad second. Alan and *fidus Achates* had disappeared into the railway station vestibule, where there is a most gorgeous advertising machine driven by clockwork. One of its panels bears the legend: "Watch this space!" If you have youth and patience to help you, you do watch, and in a few seconds the whole of the compartments in the machine slowly and majestically change, revealing new marvels of placardry and the time-table for the next hour. The miracle had been wrought, and as the next was rather too distant to warrant the sacrifice of the impending meal, the young men came forth and strolled along arm-in-arm a few yards in front of us.

They crossed the road and stood up at the corner beside the church, that wonder of Norman Shaw's handiwork, which brings architects on pious pilgrimages

> . . . . from every schires ende
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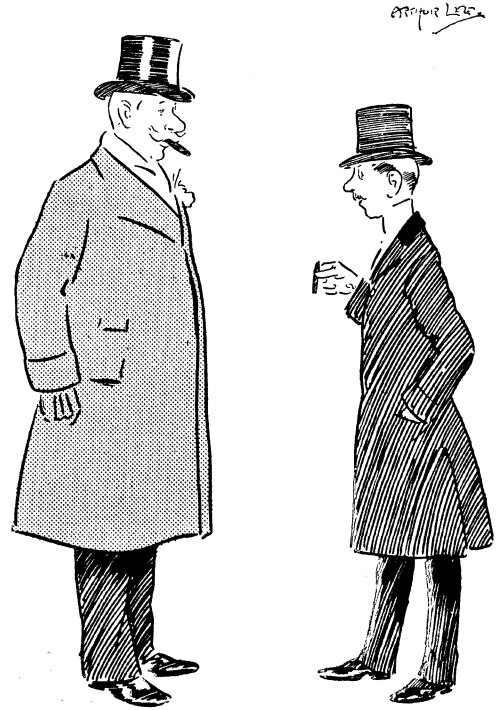
to worship at its beauty. I began to steer for the place where the boys were standing, when all at once Elsa stopped. Flinging my hand aside, she cried: "I'll *make* him speak to me," and with the words she darted off, a flurry of navy-blue skirt and twinkling legs.

Her arms were round the unfortunate Alan before he knew what had happened. He too put his arms round Elsa with an involuntary movement, and then paused, glancing shame-faced at Achates, a merry-eyed urchin, who grinned heartlessly. At that moment I took care to show myself. The presence of a man of mature years was an immense relief. Immediately Alan's face cleared, he and Achates put on gracious smiles and pulled off their caps, while I, of course, doffed mine with equal ceremony. Was there not a lady in the case?

"Do tell me, Alan," I said, "what are those funny sticks you Boy Scouts carry at drill?"

The pioneer, after a complimentary word of consultation with Achates on some frontiersman's technicality, launched into an explanation, in which Elsa, who ought to have been a boy, was as interested as the others. When all was said, it was a very happy little girl that bade "Good-bye" to her hero, now restored to his pedestal, of which he is luckily as unconscious as he is of the risk he had run.

Lawrence North.



PROBABLY.

"YES, I get rid of a lot of cigars in a year—giving 'em to my friends, y'know."

"H'm! Get rid of a lot of friends too, don't you?"



A BRILLIANT IDEA.

"TELL yer what, boys—s'pose we all walk in backwards; then they'll think we're coming out!"

"It's pretty rough to be gone through like this, ain't it, sir?" inquired one of a gang of roughs who had just "held up" a country squire on a lonely road and relieved him of his purse.

"Oh, that's all right, my man," the "held-up" one answered cheerfully. "I was on my way to a bazaar. You're first, and there's an end of it."

MACHINE-MADE TRIOLETS.

In the water they met
Where all classes are equal,
She could not forget
Her curls had got wet,
But she'd more to regret
As is shown in the sequel.
In the water they met,
Where all classes are equal.

For her water-wings flew
Right away on the ocean.
Alas! what could she do?
But he swam to pursue
That blur on the blue
With a manly devotion.
For her water-wings flew
Right away on the ocean.

He swam awfully well,
And she thought him a hero
Without parallel.
She was rather a swell,
But how could she tell
He, ashore, was a *Pierrot?*
He swam awfully well,
And she thought him a hero.

Jessie Pope.



VOTES FOR WOMEN.

"EVE started it—giving man the apple; now the Suffragettes are giving him the pip."



"THE ANNUNCIATION." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

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"A HYACINTH FIELD." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

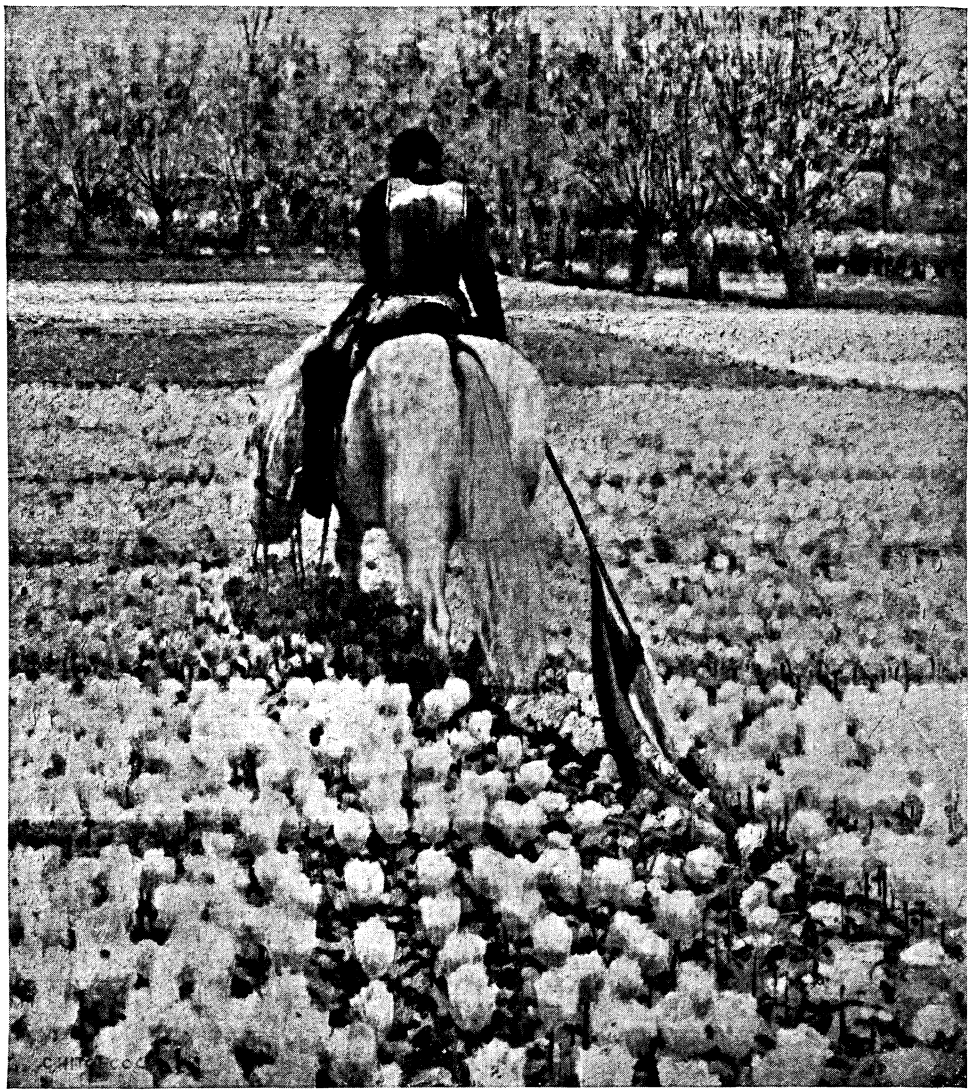
THE ART OF MR. GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

IN considering the art of a foreigner, it is of interest to take into account the artistry of his nation, its rise and progress. Especially is this the case with the art of an American, for America is a young country, and in no country does art ever blossom into vigour until the minds of its men have sufficient leisure to turn from thoughts of utility to those of embellishment.

The history of painting in America is almost entirely a nineteenth century record, and even the first half of that century was mainly one of imitation and accepted tradition.

Benjamin West, John Copley, John Trumble, Gilbert Stuart, John Vanderlyn, Washington Alston, Thomas Sully, Rembrandt Peel, J. W. Jarvis had all ability, it is true, but that ability was in a great measure killed by conventionality. Then came a revolution, the reaction in favour of naturalism. America threw off the art traditions she had inherited from the Mother Country, as she had already thrown off her sovereignty, and she sought to see for herself and so establish her own individuality. Then came a second period in her artistic progress, when she improved in technique, when the work was distinctly national, but a little pompous; and the men of this period who stand forth are Thomas Doughty, Thomas Cole, Frederick Church, J. F. Kensett, and A. B. Durand. Then she



"VANQUISHED." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

entered upon her third period under the romantic teaching first of Germany and then of France. Whispers of Lessing as a teacher drew Emanuel Leutze, an American in all but name, to Würtemberg. Leutze imparted his acquired knowledge to Eastman Johnson, who was, probably, the first American painter to develop an atmospheric sense of colour due not entirely to the teaching of Leutze, but in great measure to his own long sojourn in Holland and his study there of Dutch art and of the harmony which is so distinctive a quality of that land.

From this time on, Americans flooded the schools of Düsseldorf, Würtemberg, Munich, and ultimately Paris. Frank Duveneck is an excellent example of a Munich-trained American, whilst, in the work of William Morris Hunt, George Inness, Thomas Hicks, and John Lafarge we find the unmistakable *cachet* of that French romanticism of which Corot was the culmination. These men belong distinctly to the Barbizon school—as much so, indeed, as do Corot, Rousseau, or Millet, but D. W. Tryon, J. H. Twachtman, T. Robinson, Childe Hassam, Horatio Walker, each of whom has borne no inconspicuous part in the building up of American art, have produced work which, while it owes something to the teaching of



"ST. GEORGE." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

France, is of a more indigenous quality than that of the other men we have named before. If we supplement these names with those of George de Forest Brush, Abbot H. Thayer, Thomas W. Dewing, and H. Siddons Mowbray, we find pretty well all the links which connect Emanuel Leutze with that group of prominent American painters which, to-day, makes their nation's art a world power. In writing of the art of his countrymen, Professor J. C. Van Dyke says: "Besides the painters who reside in the United States, there is a large contingent of Americans resident abroad which perhaps belongs to the American school as much as to any other. These painters do not, however, represent the land or the people to the extent usually assumed by Europeans. Indeed, it is questionable if they represent America in any way. James McNeill Whistler, although American-born, is an example of the modern man without a country. No nation can claim him as an artist because he seems to have no nationality. E. A. Abbey, John S. Sargent, Mark Fisher, and J. J. Shannon, are American only by birth; they are resident in London and are cosmopolitan in their methods and themes. This may be said with equal truth of many painters resident in Paris and elsewhere on the Continent. However good as art it may be, there is nothing distinctively American about the work of W. T. Dannat, Alexander Harrison, George Hitchcock . . . If they owe allegiance to any centre or city, it is to Paris rather than to New York"; and to this last pronouncement of Professor Van Dyke we venture to take exception, for in the case of Mr. Hitchcock we are inclined to think that he owes a considerable amount of his vitality to his native land, and a considerable amount of his acquired artistry, not to Paris, but to the land of his adoption, Holland, for, as Mütter says, he unites in his art the Dutch phlegm with a certain English pre-Raphaelite *nuance*, finds in it a Parisian *chic*, a fragrant aroma, and a grave, thoughtful idyllicism.

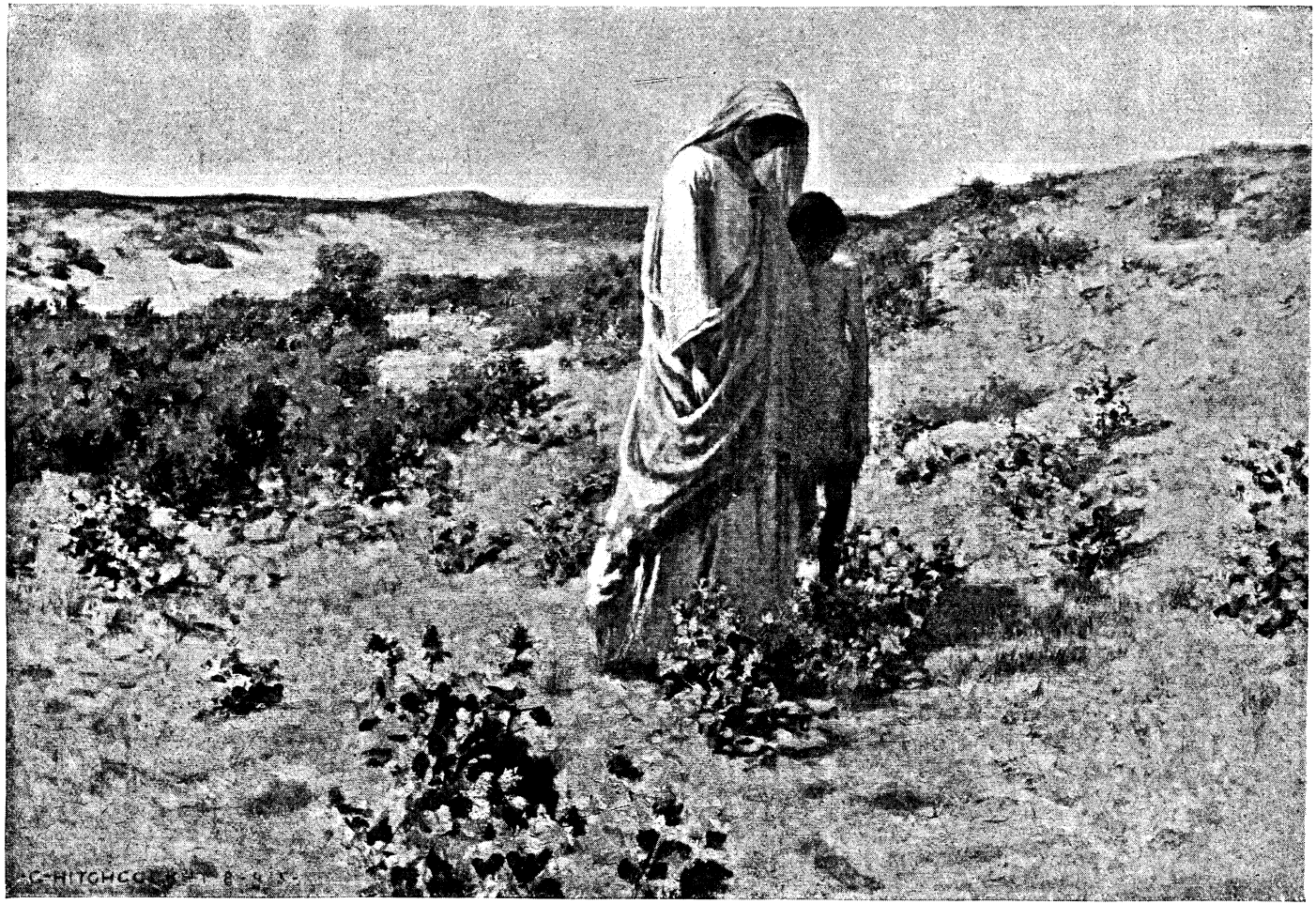
George Hitchcock was born in Providence, Rhode Island, his people having settled there when differences on religious matters drove Roger Williams, with many other friends, from Massachusetts.



"THE TOILERS OF THE SEA." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

The name Roger Williams gives us pause for a moment, not only because he in himself is a man worthy to be recalled to the memory of a forgetful world, but because he was one of those Puritans of whose prejudices the weight was ever in the scale against the encouragement of art, and who were firm believers in the heresy that beauty is one of the snares of the devil.

About 1630, Roger Williams left his cure in England for Massachusetts, on account of his Puritanical belief, and became pastor of a church at Salem. Here, however, on the



"HAGAR AND ISHMAEL." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.



"THE CHRISTENING." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

same count, he came into conflict with the powers that then were and was banished from the colony. With five followers he embarked from Narrangassett Bay for Rhode Island, where he founded a settlement to which he gave the name of Providence.

Mr. George Hitchcock is a descendant not only from Roger Williams, in the seventh generation, but is also related to descendants of four of his five companions. With the exception of his father, who was a portrait-painter of considerable talent, all George Hitchcock's family were associated with the law, and he himself was intended for that profession, and, at Harvard, in 1874, after his Brown University education, he actually took the degree of LL.B.

Vinegar to oil is, however, not more



"TULIP CULTURE." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.



"THE MOB CAP." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

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opposed than is the artistic temperament to the dogmas of the law. It is the habit of genius to fling aside all those rules which oppose themselves to the liberty of artistic production, whilst the purism of the legal mind jealously excludes all departure from restraint. George Hitchcock is the possessor, and to a very large extent, of the artistic temperament, and although he had scholastic ability sufficient to ensure his taking a creditable degree at college, he wisely gave up the pursuit of the law after a very short trial.

His aspiring youth and his ignorance of the difficulties which a painter is bound to encounter, that ignorance which is so easily forgivable when it is the apology of inexperience, led him, in 1878, to take a studio in Chicago and to hope by means of his natural gifts to make his immediate mark in art. Naturally he failed, as he had then but little of that knowledge by means of



"THE LAST MOMENTS OF SAPPHO." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

From the original in the gallery of the Art Institute, Chicago. Reproduced from the plate published by Neurdein Frères, Paris.



"THE HOUR OF VESPERS." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

Reproduced from the plate published by Neurdein Frères, Paris.

which the painter's inspirations are visually embodied, for no matter how active may be artistic sensibility, it finds adequate expression only through technical integrity.

There is no doubt that in those days Mr. Hitchcock must have suffered bitter disappointment, not because he failed to attain financial success, for, as a matter of fact, he succeeded in establishing for himself a quite encouraging number of patrons, but because, artistically, he felt himself to have failed to make his mark, and it was a very abashed youth who, having shut up his studio in Chicago, came to England in 1879.

On reaching England, his first idea was to enter himself as a student at South Kensington, but the exacting tests applied to candidates for admission to that art centre



"ST. GENEVIEVE." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

struck him as so discouraging that he was disinclined to submit himself to the examination. He accordingly went to Heatherley's, there to realise that the methods employed were curiously subversive of the text, "*Ars longa, vita brevis est.*" He consequently left Heatherley's for Paris, where he established himself as a pupil of Julian's.

"Fearfully competent" does the Parisian training make a man's drawing; tedious and monotonous is the perpetual "Dust it out" which leads to orderly progression. Black-and-white work so taught is but craftsmanship, and however dexterous, however knowledgable, however capable may be his drawing in the schools, it is not until he leaves them that the student is actually called upon to show whether he is merely a good mechanical painter or has the right stuff in him to make an artist.

At Julian's Mr. Hitchcock learnt to draw, and to draw well, but the training had not made him otherwise articulate; and, perfectly alive to this, he made his way to Düsseldorf, but here he again failed to find the help he needed. He was, however, exactly in the right condition to absorb, exactly in the right state of mind and knowledge to receive, impressions; and, turning now his steps to the Hague, he numbered himself among the pupils of Mesdag. From Mesdag's famous recipe, "Yellow ochre and black," he rebelled, but he had the advantage of watching the master work and of learning much of his remarkable power of physical expression on canvas, of his mastery over material, and of his extraordinary capacity for pursuing in a picture the original aims with which he started it. Having worked for some time with Mesdag, George Hitchcock felt it was time to free himself altogether from leading-strings, and accordingly he went to Egmond, a village on the North Sea, and set himself to the task of painting from Nature.



"CALYPSO." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

Reproduced from the photograph published by Neurdein Frères, Paris.

Here, painting hard from Nature, Mr. Hitchcock made admirable progress, and his work, free from all meretricious appeal, was full of sincerity, full of the sympathetic comprehension of the beauty he saw in his surroundings. All he did was handled in true relation to light and air, and as a result it was pictorially good. Here he gained an insight into essentials and learned to give expression to Nature's moods. The method of his placing of his figures in their settings was at once both judicious and artistic. The sentiment with which he endowed them was never forced, the drama never obtrusive, the characterisation never fantastic. He was quick to part company with academic ideals and to become a painter of peasantry; and even his earliest work in this North Sea village seemed at once to be complete in method and to reveal great capacity. Yet recognition was slow. In 1881 he sent to the New York Water Colours Society's Exhibition a very able water-colour which was ignored, and no success attended a show which, later, he held in London of small canvases dealing with Dutch life. The first recognition, indeed, which came to him, to bring with it both confidence and encouragement, was from the Empress of Austria, who, chancing to be in Egmond, was shown a room in the inn in which he was staying, where his work was lying about. He did not happen to be at home, but Her Majesty was so favourably impressed that she afterwards sent an equerry to buy from him a large view of the Dutch coast, full of truthful accuracy and instinct with Nature, which she had much admired. From this time forward Mr. Hitchcock commanded the

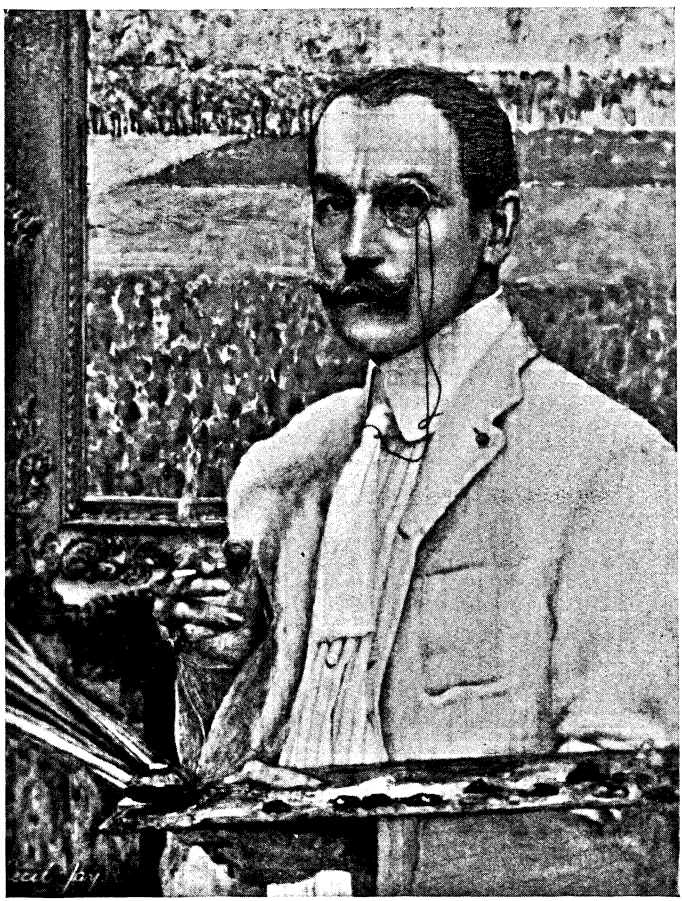


"MATERNITY." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

From the original in the McCulloch collection.

success he had hitherto failed to secure. The exquisite sobriety of his "Tulip Culture," exhibited in the Salon of 1887, commended itself to Gérôme, who pronounced it the best American picture of the year, and the French papers were filled with praise of the picture's breadth, delicacy, and refined colour; its accuracy of detail, yet largeness of treatment, its literalness and romance, and the exquisite gradation of its tones.

In 1886 his work made its first appearance on the walls of the Royal Academy, and after this picture, "Alma Mater," came "Dutch Shrimpers," "Tulip Culture," a variant of his Salon success; "Maternity," "The Scarecrow," "Mary at the House of Elizabeth," "Hagar and Ishmael," "St. George," "The Godmother," "The Promise of March," and "Hyacinths."



GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

From a miniature by Cecil Jay (Mrs. George Hitchcock).

From the titles of these pictures we see how quickly Mr. Hitchcock passed from peasant to religious and classical subjects, but it is to the exhibitions of Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Vienna, Venice, Brussels, Gand, Antwerp, and to America we must turn if we wish to get any accurate idea of the scope either of his subjects or his talent. In Paris was exhibited his "Tulip Culture," "The Annunciation," "Maternity," "The Flight into Egypt," "Vanquished" (a wounded Dutch soldier being carried by his horse the shortest way home through a field of tulips), "The Last Moments of Sappho," "Magnificat: the Blessed Mother," "Calypso," "Proserpina," "Ariadne," yet a second "Annunciation," and a second "Flight into Egypt"; and it was here that, for his first picture exhibited in the Salon, he received *mention honorable*, and for his third a gold medal. At Berlin for "The Annunciation" he was made the recipient of a medal and many compliments. Dresden, besides conferring on him a medal, has placed his Haarlem "Tulip Field" in its permanent gallery. Munich decorated him for the same picture for which Berlin conferred its medal, and made him a member of the Sécession Society. Vienna, besides conferring its medal and its officer's cross of the Franz Josef Order, elected him a corresponding member of its Academy, and he is the only American who has received the last two distinctions. America, for her permanent galleries at Chicago, Providence, and Buffalo, has bought several of his important works, amongst which "A Holland Morn," from its reproduction in colour, is the one with which the English public is most familiar.

In "The International Studio," October, 1905, Mr. Christian Brinton called Mr. Hitchcock a painter of sunlight, which is



"A HOLLAND MORN: A DUTCH FLOWER SELLER." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

From the original in the Art Institute, Chicago, reproduced from the large plate, copyrighted 1907, by Messrs. Braun, Clément et Cie., Fine-Art Publishers, Paris and London.

truly descriptive of one side of his art; for, in his "Hagar," "The Flight into Egypt," "Proserpina," "Tulip Culture," and in many of his landscapes, both large and small, the painting of sunshine has been his successful aim. Always he has taken his model, even in classical subjects, out into the open, and there, by careful studies of light and shade, endeavoured to see his subjects through the exquisite gradations of their aerial envelope, and, being an artist of singular accomplishment and considerable distinction of style, he paints truth rather than convention. Thus, giving the rein to his faculty for work, he, in this Holland which is "the birthplace of painted light," developed a rare and admirable talent which has allowed him to give to the world something new and original.

He was the first to realise that he could transfer to canvas the visual beauty of the great fields of flowers cultivated by the bulb-growers of Holland, a new departure in subject which has been mimicked and paraphrased with more or less intelligence by many another painter. Just as the credit of the discovery of the paintable qualities of tulip-fields belongs to Mr. Hitchcock, so, equally, does the credit of the discovery of the paintable qualities of Egmond belong to him; but ambitions become popular, a personal style grows into a vogue, and while Mr. Hitchcock was sitting quietly in his old Dutch garden, working out in his own way his artistic salvation, his reputation, growing and being noised abroad, attracted to Egmond students of many nationalities. Dutch, Russian, Danish, American, and German, they flocked in numbers to the small village, eager to test their weakness by Mr. Hitchcock's strength, to glean or filch from him the secret of an art which, in his case, is a too purely individual charm for imitators to annex.

The reproductions of two of the pictures in the Chantrey collection which appeared in our June number, Mr. J. MacWhirter's "June in the Austrian Tyrol," and Miss Lucy Kemp-Welch's "Colt-Hunting in the New Forest," should have been accompanied by the statement that the copyright in both cases belongs to Mr. Richard Wyman, of Bedford Street, Strand, publisher of the large plates of both subjects.

CICADAS IN VENICE.

WHAT a music made by tiny throats,
Silver cadence churned thro' whirring wings,
When 'tis night in Venice wildly floats
From the garden that is now the king's!

On the quay the dark-shawled idlers throng,
Whence some singing gondola withdraws.
These cicádas fling a lovelier song,
Far more silvery than courtier's gauze!

Restless, wave-like, to the long lagoon
Throbs that ancient wistful music, heard
When a fire still burnt within the moon,
And this earth had not yet seen a bird!

Hear they—these Venetians? Do they mark
Your triumphant strain more old than tears?
From beyond the mountains, from the dark,
Have I only brought an ear that hears?

Ah, some day, when dreams confused explore
This tired busy brain, and death looks round
My bed's foot—ah, then I know once more
That stupendous, sweet, mysterious sound!

VICTOR PLARR.

THE HARVEST MOON.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "The Garden of Lies," "Tommy Carteret," "The Quest," etc.

THAT famous—I had well-nigh said infamous — pearl, known as the Harvest Moon, swept like a scourge through the southern world a decade past, and yet I find that even the name is curiously unknown away in the north. To be sure, midway of the gem's devastating career, one of the weeklies—I rather think it was the *Graphic*—printed a half-column about it, telling the number of lives it had cost, the two great families it had wrecked, and giving the pearl's weight and value—a fantastic and incredible sum, but accurate enough, I dare say. (I prefer to think of its value in blood and in misery). But this is all the European world has ever known of the "ruby in a mist," as someone once called it. To us it was a household word. It swept us like the recurrent waves of a plague: appeared here for a little time, disappeared again, turned up there, and was again lost. Men died for it, men tricked and betrayed, stole and starved—aye, and women too. It left behind it a trail of shame, dishonour, ashes of happiness, dead men's bones. Yet comparatively few people outside of Sydney and Melbourne can ever have seen the Harvest Moon. Its evil fame was abroad from Hobart to the Days o' the Week, from Perth to Papeete, but to most it can have been but a name, a sort of legend, something to shudder over and to wonder about.

Then quite suddenly the pearl disappeared for nearly five years and was well-nigh forgotten.

It is with its resurrection that we have here to deal.

Miss Violet Lindon came out of the post-office, where she had been to send a telegram, and turned up the shady side of George Street. She walked slowly and with a somewhat elaborate air of detachment from her surroundings, but she was very conscious that few of the women who passed by, and none of the men, failed to turn their heads to look, and she inhaled the incense of admiration as a goddess might inhale sweet altar-smoke, with a comfortable thrill which never became commonplace or wearied or satisfied. She nodded to several acquaintances, for everybody is in George Street in the morning, and presently became aware that there was a little knot of people before the window of Sydney's leading jeweller and goldsmith. The people seemed to be very much excited over something, and Miss Lindon, when she had come where they were, paused and pressed in among them to look. The usual window display of rings and brooches and of pins set with Australian stones in the semblance of the Southern Cross had been covered with a sort of pall of black velvet. The velvet was raised in the middle over a block, and upon this little elevated platform lay a single unset gem, a huge pearl, pear-shaped, fiery pink in colour—the "ruby in a mist." Upon that background it glowed with an uncanny lustre: it was like something alive, something with evil fires within; it seemed to breathe as it lay, to stir—palpitate gently upon its bed. To Miss Lindon's staring eyes the Harvest Moon seemed to expand in size, to grow and grow until it hung before her in darkness like the orb from which it had taken its name. The red inner fires burned brighter and died, glowing and paling in breath-like intervals, and the Harvest Moon smiled at her across the dark, beautiful beyond expression, evil as sin, and as alluring.

Someone—a friend, as it happened—spoke to her from the throng gathered about the window, but Miss Lindon neither heard nor saw. She pushed her way through to the door and entered the shop. Within, the proprietor met her with obsequious hand-rubbings. The girl bade fair to be worth cringing to, now that she was engaged to marry a millionaire. Two months before, he would have sent an underling to greet her.

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She made her queries—the hundredth to make them that morning—but learnt little. The pearl was the property of a traveller who had left it there for safe keeping, and, in view of its historic fame, had graciously allowed its exhibition for a day or two. It was not for sale, and the owner did not wish his name known. That was absolutely all.

Miss Lindon said: "Thank you very much," and went out. She looked back once over her shoulder, and again turned up George Street, where, before a certain shop, she had ordered the car, which Soames had given her as a betrothal present, to wait. She had meant to do several more or less important things that morning, but they had fled one and all from her mind. She said "Home!" got into the car, and fell back against the soft cushions with a little sigh. It was mid-June, and the cool winter breeze bore fresh in her face as the car sped out of the traffic, crossed Castlereagh Street, and turned into the long, homeward stretch, but it might have rained or hailed or, unprecedented miracle, snowed, and Miss Lindon would not have known the difference. She sat still in her place, eyes closed, and, as before, the Harvest Moon hung before her against darkness, smiling at her, mocking her, an evil and an exquisite dream.

Arrived at her brief journey's end, she went through the house, found nobody about save a parlourmaid, and so passed on into the garden. Unpretentious house and little terraced garden were perched high over one of the indentations of Sydney's justly famous harbour. The outlook was very lovely—superb. Miss Lindon went to a certain bench which stood in the shade, and sat down there. Beneath her feet the soil dropped away in a swift slope, and the waters of the many-bayed harbour lay still and blue. It was like a branch with leaves. Little sailing-boats dotted the coves, and in the channel a Union steamer made its way seawards, trailing a veil of smoke. Out near the Heads another liner was inbound, a New Zealander.

Miss Lindon closed her eyes, and it was as if the three years past were suddenly removed from the procession of time—removed cleanly, without violence, and the edges closed together. She heard young Castle's voice as he sat beside her on the bench; she heard it shake a very little with the boy's honest emotion; she heard it drop to a pleading whisper as he leant nearer to her, and she heard the very stir of his movement.

Three years it was, almost to the week—within the month surely, for the same yellow winter roses had been in bloom then that were making the garden fragrant now, and those roses lasted only a fortnight or thereabouts.

Three years! And where was young Castle now? Heaven knew—if anybody.

It was not very often that Miss Lindon allowed her memories, feelings, emotions unrestrained licence. She often said to a certain friend and intimate that she couldn't afford it. A girl who had had to make her own career, with only beauty to begin on, build up her own social recognition from pretty nearly total obscurity—bark for her own biscuits—couldn't afford emotional relaxations—not yet, at least. But the sight of the Harvest Moon lying in state upon its pall of black had shaken her more than she would have believed to be possible. It brought him back, the boy who had loved her, with an illusion of reality that almost frightened her. She saw his long, thin, sprawling length, she saw the ugly, whimsical, lovable face of him with the blue eyes and the Irish eyebrows that went up at the inner ends. She heard the boy's voice—it pleaded with her once more—

"Give me-a chance! Only give me a chance to prove it!"

"*I* know," she heard him say. "Oh, Heaven, *I* know better than you do, even better than you do, what a good-for-nothing cumberer of the earth I've been. I know that. But just give me a chance to prove that I can be something, *do* something, accomplish something for—love of you. Let me sack a city or two for you, build an empire, win a crown for you. Ain't there something you'd like done? Ain't there *anything*?"

It seemed to Miss Lindon that, in some strange fashion, she was looking on, apart, like a stranger, an unseen third in that place. For she heard her own voice, Violet Lindon's voice, and she saw her own face turned away, out over the placid harbour. She heard the girl say a little wearily, as if she were beginning to be a trifle bored—

"Oh, yes, heaps of things!" She heard a little laugh, and then—

"Bring me the Harvest Moon! It has been lost for a long time now—two years or more. Bring me the Harvest Moon, if you're looking for something to do." She heard young Castle's light, answering laugh, and saw then the abrupt change of expression in his mobile face. She saw seriousness, force, decision come there, something new in the eyes—something knights may have worn

—an unprecedented light. He rose to his feet and the girl rose with him. The watcher saw their faces, and both were a little pale.

"Do you mean that?" young Castle asked in a whisper. "Do you happen to mean that?" She saw the girl's eyes meet his gravely, and heard her say: "Yes. Yes." It was coming very near home, that talk of the great pearl, for then, as now and always, the great passion of her life—the only one, perhaps—had been precious gems—a passion inexplicable, beyond bounds, something like a mania.

"Bring me the Harvest Moon!" the girl said, and young Castle answered—

"I will—or die trying."

After that he said—

"And when I come back with it, Violet?"

"I shall be waiting," said she. "I'll wait for you, Jerry." A sudden little unaccustomed flash of tenderness seems to have crossed her, for she leant forward and kissed the boy who stood there, and young Castle turned quite white and shut his eyes. Once more he spoke unsteadily. He said—

"Do you love me, Violet?" And she, still in her odd, tender mood, said—

"Yes. Oh, yes, indeed, Jerry. Yes. And I'll wait for you. Never fear! I'll wait." She said: "It's a test of you, isn't it? A proof of you. When you come back, I shall be here waiting." She even said—

"Come back, anyhow, my dear. Even if you fail, I shall want you." But to that the lad shook his head, saying—

"If I fail, I shan't come back. I shan't be alive, you see." Then he kissed her hands and went away. And that was all of it.

The three years slipped neatly and cleanly back into their place in the procession of time, and, for an instant, Miss Lindon covered her eyes with her hands. Afterwards she gave a little unsteady laugh, and it turned, at the end, to a laugh of mockery. What an extremely absurd scene! How very like poor young Castle to make a bit of melodrama—but how very unlike Violet Lindon to follow him upon the stage! The three-years-older girl laughed again at herself. But she found time for a sigh over the lad who had never come back.

Had she ever loved him? She shook her head slowly. No, at the most and best it had been a passing mood of tenderness. Loved him? Hardly!

Poor Castle, with his dreams and his romantic oaths and his fond eyes! Where was he now? Alive or dead? How long had he, who possessed no more steadiness of purpose than a kitten, held himself to his absurd quest? A month? Six months? A year?

The girl sat up with a little sudden cry. Could it be that young Castle was the mysterious traveller who had brought the Harvest Moon to Sydney? She dropped back again, smiling. Not he. Success was not in such as Castle. He was marked for failure. Born to it. Besides, he would have brought the pearl to her at once, not exhibited it in a jeweller's window. No, it was not Castle.

She heard her mother's shrill voice at a window, and rose a little wearily to go in. The "ruby in a mist" preceded her slow steps, hanging in darkness before her.

At the door a sealed note sent by hand was given her. It was written upon the paper of the Australia, the big hotel of which Sydney is rather justly proud. Miss Lindon did not recognise the hand, and so, when she had torn the note open, looked at the end for the name. It was signed "Ridforth." The girl gave an exclamation of great surprise, and sat down in a chair, staring at the written sheet before her. Lord Ridforth in Sydney, and writing to her!

She had met that middle-aged peer a few weeks before on a cruise among the Islands. Two or three times during the winter season the Northern Steamship Company of New Zealand sends out a small steamer from Auckland for a month's cruise through the Tongan, Samoan, and Fiji groups, returning thence to Sydney. The little steamer takes out passengers and a general cargo, picking up copra and green bananas to bring home, and the voyage is very popular among both New Zealanders and Australians. The Marquis of Ridforth, making a leisurely tour of the globe, chanced to include this little cruise in his itinerary, and so fell in with Miss Violet Lindon and her mother, also with a fat gentleman called Soames, a sheep-owner. He left the ship, however, at Suva in the Fijis, instead of returning to Sydney, and Miss Lindon had heard no more of him.

She thought of him now, as she sat over his note, intensely and excitedly curious as to its contents, yet, after the manner of her sex, delaying to read. She pictured his grave and serious face, the somewhat old-fashioned courtesy of his manner. A little flush came to her cheeks as she remembered the convenient opportunities she had offered

Lord Ridforth for increasing the warmth of their acquaintance if he had chosen so to do. (The purser had put it somewhat more vulgarly than that. "S' help me, the girl'll choke him to death. She's round his neck the day long.) Perhaps Lord Ridforth was slow to see opportunities. In any case, she had failed there, failed outright. Hence—victory for the long-patient Soames.

Miss Lindon took up the note, which she had let fall in her lap, and read it through. After a pause she read it through again, and then sat for a long time and looked at nothing across the room. In the end a slow smile came upon her lips and remained there. It had an oddly triumphant look, and so had a new light that was in her eyes. Presently she went to the telephone, which was in a sort of closet, and shut the door behind her. She called up a certain friend, the one woman with whom she was truly intimate and on confidential terms. She said—

"Is that you, Milly?" "Yes, Violet." "Oh, very well, thanks. Yes, just in from shopping. Milly, look here; I want you to do something for me. I want to spend the night at your house, and I want to say that I'm dining there—a party, because I shall be very, very much dressed up. You see, I'm going to dine with—somebody at the Australia, but, of course, I can't tell that to mother. No, no! Heavens, no! Soames is in Queensland at one of his stations. Besides—— Well, if you care to know, it's Lord Ridforth." She gave a little low laugh, presumably in answer to astonishment at the other end of the wire, and the laugh also was triumphant. She said—

"I don't know at all. Perhaps—— Well, some people make up their minds slowly, you know. Oh, I don't know. He merely says that he wants to see me about something very important, and that he can't explain why it's impossible for him to come here to the house. He says I'll understand that later—— I don't know. He's rather odd, you see. Anyhow, I shall have something important to tell you to-night. No, I didn't think so on the ship. He's very stiff and—unapproachable. . . . Yes, by eleven, I should think. Wait up for me. Thanks, Milly. Eleven o'clock, then. Good-bye."

Miss Lindon wrote a little note and despatched it by her chauffeur, whom she trusted. Afterwards she went upstairs to her own room and began to look over her evening dresses, but once or twice she paused and stood still for a time, smiling that same triumphant smile. Once she said aloud: "Lady Ridforth. . . . The Marchioness of Ridforth." And she said the words over again, as if they made a very sweet sound in her ears. Her eyes fell upon a photograph of her *fiancé* which stood on the dressing-table—a fat, genial gentleman with diamond shirt-buttons. Miss Lindon snapped her fingers at him and laughed.

* * * * *

The waiters cleared away the dinner things and departed, to return no more until summoned, the obsequious *maître d'hôtel* brought the coffee and liqueurs, set them at hand, bowed himself out of the door backwards, and the two were left alone in the little private dining-room at the Australia. It is not a pretty room, for the decorations are abominable, but flowers had been set about it in tall stands, roses banked on the table. The music from the great dining-room, just across an air-shaft, came faintly in through the curtained window, and now and then a burst of laughter or the sound of a raised voice. The orchestra began to play Gounod's "Berceuse." Lord Ridforth drew a long breath as one who says: "Now for it," and raised his eyes. Miss Lindon smiled at him across the corner of the table, and the man's eyes paid grudging homage to her extraordinary and sumptuous beauty.

"I have already apologised," said he, "for asking you to do so very unconventional a thing as to dine with me here alone, and I must now explain why I asked it." He said—

"I have a little story to tell you. It is not a very pretty story, but you must hear it. I brought you here to listen to it. It concerns a man I found at Fiji—at Suva, where I left the ship."

She said a blank "Oh!" It seemed to her a very odd time to tell stories about men in Fiji. She did not understand at all, but she waited, outwardly polite.

"You may remember," said Lord Ridforth, "that we arrived in Suva early one morning and were to have the day there. The passengers all engaged vehicles to take them on the usual drive across the hills and along the shore—the drive that all tourists take as a matter of course. Afterwards we lunched, some on board the ship, others at the inn—'Mother' Macdonald's. The old woman is called, I believe, the 'terror of the South Seas,' but I found her, later on, a very kindly soul. I myself happened to have a letter to the Resident Governor, and



"'Only give me a chance to prove it!'"

so lunched at Government House. But the late afternoon I spent in wandering about the little village and visiting the curio-dealers' shop. It was near five, I think, when I sat down on one of the benches that are placed under that row of blue gums across the street from 'Mother' Macdonald's. You remember the place? It is the central point of Suva. Sitting there, you face the 'beach'—the main street—and your back is to the harbour. I had once or twice noticed a very ragged and unkempt white man who seemed to be loafing about with no object. I had seen a little party of natives, who were passing by, stop for an instant and poke fun at him—one, I remember, prodded him harmlessly in the ribs, and the white man screamed and wept. Well, presently the ship's purser came past, and this ragged object accosted the purser and was repulsed. The purser sat down beside me for a few moments, and I asked him who this rather piteous tramp might be. The purser told me that he was a half-mad Australian reduced to extremities, doubtless through drink, that he was without means—'on the beach' it is technically called, I understand—and that he was trying to beg a passage back to Brisbane or Sydney. The purser, before he went on his way, said that there were many such in the Islands, all miserable enough, but all unworthy.

"I remained where I was for some time more, and presently the ragged tramp came up to me and began to beg in most piteous terms that I would help him. Personally he was—ah, shocking, shocking, but I detected at times in his speech an echo of something like refinement. So I questioned the man. He was not altogether sane, I think, for he had suffered the most hideous and unbelievable things, but I learnt that he had come to the Islands from Australia a few years ago, though he was English born. I learnt the reason for his coming, and his name. I found that I knew his people in England and in Ireland—had known them, I should say—and it fell to me to tell this poor, starved, and half-crazed beach-comber that through a succession of deaths he was now the head of his house and an Irish peer. I do not think the news made the slightest impression upon him. Indeed, I doubt that he really understood it, for such brain as he had left was full of but two things—the nightmare memory of what he had suffered, and one single desire—to get back to his starting-point with something he had set out to win.

"I need not tell you that I at once promised to engage a passage for him on our ship, and to see that he was made as presentable as could be before sailing. The poor fellow's gratitude, Miss Lindon, would, I think, have touched your heart. I think it would have touched your heart."

Miss Lindon glanced up at her host with a mechanically polite smile. She was not at all interested in his story; she was bored and a little angry. If the man had brought her here to make a declaration to her, why not do it and have it over with?

"Yes," she said vaguely. "Yes, of course, very terrible!" And Lord Ridforth regarded her a moment in silence. Then he went on. He said—

"A very odd thing occurred. I was leading my *protégé* up the 'beach' towards one of the trader's stores where I had seen suits of white drill hanging on the wall. On the way we passed the end of one of the little alleys which climb the rise of ground beyond. There were trees and shrubbery at the end of the alley, and among them stood two of the ship's passengers, a man and a woman. The two must have imagined themselves to be screened securely from observation, for they were—ah, permitting themselves, if I may say so, some slight expression of mutual regard. I naturally was for hastening on, but my friend grasped me by the arm, and, when I turned to him, he was trembling very violently like a man in a severe ague. He pointed to the—ah, lady among the shrubbery, who, with her companion had turned away and was walking on up the hill, and he asked me, in a sort of whisper, who she was. I told him, and he gave a dreadful cry of anguish and despair. He began to weep aloud like a little child. He was utterly unstrung. He cried out bitter and terrible things which were, at the time, incomprehensible to me, though later on they were made plain. To be brief, the poor wretch collapsed then and there. It was as if the life had been broken in him. There was no longer any question of fitting him out and taking him on board ship, it was a matter of bed and medical attendance and nursing. I half led and half carried him to 'Mother' Macdonald's, browbeat her into giving us place, and then sent on board for my luggage. That, Miss Lindon, was why I left the steamer at Suva."

The girl stared at Lord Ridforth with frowning, puzzled eyes. She still failed to understand, but, under the surface of her bewilderment, very deep down within her,

there began slowly to grow something cold and heavy and terrible, and it was fear. She began to be afraid, and a sudden shiver wrung her, but she did not know yet what it was that she was afraid of. Lord Ridforth went on—

"I nursed this wreck of a man," said he, "for ten days, ten very terrible days, because during most of the time he was in a delirium, raving, suffering over again the incredible tortures which had made him what he was. I heard horrors which I shall never forget—horrors which will haunt me so long as I live, as they haunted my poor young friend before he died. You see, he had nearly starved twice, and once he had been lost at sea on a raft without food for ten days, and without drink save that sometimes it rained and wet his rags, and he sucked the water from them. Once he had been taken by natives in Humboldt Bay, and dragged inland and kept there as a slave for six months. At another time—ah, well, why pile horror upon horror? There is much of it that I could not possibly put into words, though I should like to put every hour of every day of those three years into the strongest words to be found, and I should like to tell you all of it—all of it, to the last, bitterest end."

Miss Lindon hid her face with a little exclamation of horror, but Lord Ridforth faced her sternly.

"Perhaps you would like to know," said he, "why this poor lad left civilisation and suffered and died so terribly. It was, so please you, to find a pearl for a lady who had told him she loved him!"

The girl's hands slipped down from her face as if the strength had gone suddenly out of them, and for a long, silent instant she stared at Lord Ridforth, white, open-lipped, her great eyes grown, it seemed, twice greater, and black and terrible. Then she gave a loud, sharp cry that was well-nigh a scream, and she dragged herself half out of her chair, holding by the edge of the table before her. She called that poor lad's name—

"Jerry Castle! It was Jerry Castle!" She withdrew one shaking hand from the table's edge, and swayed with its support gone. The hand wavered and swept uncertainly across her white face—across the great black eyes.

"I know," she said in a swift whisper. "The Harvest Moon! I saw it this morning in that window. I saw it. Jerry found it—he really found it—somehow—— And you brought it to me." She dropped back with a heavy, falling movement into her chair, and her two hands lay out before her upon the cloth of the table, palms up. They stirred a little, and she said in a flat, strange voice—

"There ought to be blood on them. It seems to me that there ought to be blood on them."

Lord Ridforth spoke bitterly—

"I think there is."

He put one hand into his waistcoat pocket and, between thumb and forefinger, withdrew a small object which he laid upon the table, half-way of its width. It was the Harvest Moon.

A deep flush swept Miss Lindon's face, and her hands twitched and moved towards the pearl, but withdrew themselves, and lay, as it were, half encircling it.

"See!" said she, "blood there also. Blood in a mist." Abruptly she folded her arms together and laid her face upon them and began to weep with terrible and rending sobs. Lord Ridforth watched her without a tremor. If there was any expression at all in his hard, pale face, it may have been a kind of wintry joy, a kind of grim satisfaction in her suffering.

But after a long time the girl sat up once more, and her face was still, but grief had ravaged it incredibly. She spoke at last in a low voice, steady, unshaken, quite expressionless, but what the voice failed to express the girl's great eyes spoke with a dreadful emphasis.

"And so," said she, "I have killed him. I have brought him to his death." She said—

"A foolish, vain girl sent him out upon a preposterous quest, and she hadn't even the excuse of love to offer. I didn't really love him, you know—then. I let him go; I sent him as much to be rid of him as for any other reason. Maybe I said I loved him, I don't know. Sometimes I did love him, a very little. . . . So he went, for my sake, for a foolish whim of mine, and suffered tortures—all the tortures there are to suffer. And when he could suffer no more, he died. I think, I rather think there should be some special sort of hell for such women as I. Don't you think so? It wouldn't be quite just to let us off with the common penalties."

A swift, hard shiver wrung her from head to foot, and it seemed as if that strange and appalling calm—the calm of utter despair—was to be broken in violence, but she made a great effort and mastered herself. She said—

"No, I didn't even love him. If I had——"

"You told him you loved him," said Lord Ridforth. "You—kissed him, I understand, and promised to wait."

"Did I?" she asked dully. "Did I do that? I dare say. It's rather like me." She gave an exceedingly bitter smile.

"False!" said she. "False in the beginning, false all through to the last. I've never been anything but false. I never had the slightest intention of waiting for Gerald Castle. I'd almost forgotten his existence until I saw the pearl this morning. I've been false to everybody always.

"You see," she explained patiently, and there was something piteous and touching in the girl's tearless abasement, "you see, I've been so ambitious, and I've had to work so hard, that I've lost the sense of honesty. You see, my people are rather poor, and they had no particular social position here—— Ah, yes! I know. You will laugh at social distinctions in the Colonies, but we have them for all that. I should think so! Well, I had to do my own climbing, and I had only my looks and some intelligence to go on. I wanted to marry well—to have position and influence and beautiful things—jewellery—all that. It has been a passion with me. On that cruise, a few weeks ago, when I met you, I deliberately did everything in my power to attract you to me. I saw myself making a great marriage. I'd have given my body and soul for it. You knew, I suppose? You saw me at it?"

"I did," said Lord Ridforth.

"Well, I failed at that, and so I took the Soames man instead. He has been waiting about for a year or more. I let him propose the very evening before we landed at Suva. And—Jerry saw us—saw me let Soames kiss—— Oh!" she covered her eyes, writhing.

"I think that is the bitterest of all," she said. "It was that that killed him, wasn't it? Yes, I thought so. . . . I'll tell you something more. When I got your note to-day asking me to dine here with you, do you know what I imagined—hoped? Do you?"

"I dare say I do," said Lord Ridforth coldly, and she nodded at him, saying—

"Yes, that's what I hoped for. I thought you'd thought it over and made up your mind. Of course, I didn't know you knew about Soames. . . . So now you know what I am—have been."

"Have been?" the man demanded.

"Yes," she said. "Have been. It may seem a little odd, but, you see, I—love him now. Now that he is dead I know that I love him, I wish I could crawl on hands and knees to where he lies and tell him so. I wish I were dead and lying with him in his grave.

"Perhaps, you know," she said, "perhaps, deep down in me, under the other things, I've been loving him all the while. I wonder."

"Love," observed Lord Ridforth, "or something rather like it, has often before been purchased by some such trifle as lies there before you." It may be that she did not understand the full depth of the insult, or it may be that she did; but, if so, she gave no sign. There was no smallest shred of pride in her in that hour. She looked up at the man patiently.

"Oh," she said, "you mean the pearl? You mean the Harvest Moon? Yes, of course. What shall we do with it, I wonder?"

"Do with it?" cried he. "Wear it, of course! Wear it at your wedding—and ever after. It'll make you famous." The tone was harsh and jeering, brutally bitter, but again she showed no resentment.

"Oh, there won't be any wedding," she said, speaking still in her colourless, childlike tone—but the eyes told! The eyes told it all—"Did you think I'd go on and marry Mr. Soames now? Oh, no, indeed! You see, I love Jerry Castle, and Jerry's dead, and I killed him." She took off her engagement ring—she had shifted it to the right hand before setting out from home, lest it betray her—and, after a moment, she took off a rather elaborate "dog collar" of pearls and cornflower sapphires—one gathered that this also had come from the genial Soames—and she thrust the two of them away from her, at arm's length on the table, as if she could not quite bear their near presence.

"No, I couldn't possibly marry," she repeated, shaking her head. Then, after a little space of vacant staring, she bent over the Harvest Moon.

"What to do with it?" she wondered aloud. "What to do with it now?" She looked down upon that wonderful gem, and it may be that, for a moment, some wave of the old passion, the old fierce love for beautiful gems, swept across her being, for her face flushed, and there came into her shadowy eyes a strange, hard, eager light. But in a moment it was gone, and she was as before, a woman racked by intolerable, still grief.

"It is a terrible thing," said she, looking



"Miss Lindon dropped the Harvest Moon into the glass."

upon the Harvest Moon where it lay glowing and seemed to breathe under the mellow candlelight. "It is a monstrous thing. It has brought into the world nothing but deceit and treachery, shipwreck and dishonour, blood and death. No one who has ever owned it or had anything to do with it has escaped. It is like a pestilence. What shall I do with it, Lord Ridforth?"

"The pearl is yours," said he, but he began to watch her with a new expression in his eyes.

"I don't want it," she said, shuddering. "There was a time when I would have sold my soul for it, and laughed over the bargain. Now—oh, I don't want it." She said thoughtfully—

"I could sell it, I suppose, and give the money to the Church or to the poor. But it would bring them harm somehow. I should be afraid to do that. . . . Or I could take a boat and row out into the harbour and drop it overboard. But I know that somebody would somehow find it, and then the whole wretched story would begin all over again. What shall I do with the Harvest Moon?

"*He* wanted me to have it, didn't he? He suffered like a martyr that I should have it. Have I the right to dispose of it? I wonder. . . . But I cannot bear it near me. It killed him, the pearl and I together. . . . What to do?" She gave a sudden, little sobbing cry and stared at her host. There was a new light in her eyes, half jubilant, half frightened.

"I think," she said, "that I know what

to do." She rose from her chair, moving swiftly, and turned to the small sideboard which stood against the wall behind her. There were wineglasses there, and pepper and salt shakers, and salad things, vinegar and oil bottles. Miss Lindon chose from these things and returned to her place. She set a sherry-glass before her, one of the spreading convolvulus type, and filled it from the little bottle she had found. She took up the Harvest Moon and held it for a moment between her fingers.

"He meant it for me," she said. "I cannot sell it or throw it away." Her eyes were fixed upon Lord Ridforth's eyes, and at last the man understood and started from his chair with a loud exclamation of astonishment and protest. Miss Lindon did not stir; she watched him and waited, and after a moment the man sank back again with a great breath. There was unwonted colour in his cheeks. After a time he said a little hoarsely—

"The pearl is yours."

Miss Lindon dropped the Harvest Moon into the glass, and as it disappeared the man made a sound like an audible groan. Little bubbles, streams of them, began to mount to the top of the glass, as if the liquid in it were champagne, but it was not, it was vinegar. Lord Ridforth, earlier in the evening, had wiped his eyes and complained at the acid strength of it in his salad. He wiped his brow now, and found that he was breathing a little fast. One does not quite calmly see a fortune thrown away, an historic gem swept out of existence. But he looked at the girl who sat there still, and his hard face softened. He was a grim man and ruthless, quite merciless upon occasion, but there was something in this deed that touched a responsive chord in him. A little woman could not have done it.

The liquid in the glass was turning milky white, but Miss Lindon thrust the glass aside out of danger and turned back to her host. It might have been a lump of sugar or a bread-crumb that she had dropped into the vinegar bath.

"And now," she said, "will you—do you think, Lord Ridforth, that you could tell me more about—him, any little thing, the littlest? It is all so important to me, you see! Everything that relates to him is important. Will you tell me what you can?"

The man regarded her very keenly and bent his head. Then he told her all that he knew, or could remember, or thought it best at that time to tell, of young Gerald Castle, and of Castle's awful sufferings. He must have talked quite steadily for an hour or more, or it may have been even two hours, for both of them had lost all account of time. And for the most part the girl listened without question or movement, but once or twice, as at something intolerable, she cried out in a sharp agony, and once she laid her head down upon her arms and wept quietly for a long time.

At the end she said: "I thank you more than I can ever say. Please understand, if you can, how grateful I am to you. Perhaps, once more before you leave Sydney, you would be willing to tell me more still—if there is more. You see, it means so much!....And now we must—I must go; but first——" She drew towards her the little sherry-glass and looked down upon it. At the bottom the liquid was clouded and grey, but at the top it had begun to clear. She rose to her feet, and Lord Ridforth rose with her.

"I drink," said Miss Lindon, "to the memory of a brave and faithful gentleman who suffered through me—and I drink the treasure he won for me. I think he would have liked it to be so." She drank what was in the little glass and afterwards stood still, shuddering slightly, for the acid must have burnt her throat with cruel strength. Lord Ridforth stood by with bent head. She set the glass down, and a whitish sediment coated it inside, with tiny lumps here and there, no larger than the head of a pin.

"I will go now," said Miss Lindon, but Lord Ridforth stepped quickly past her and stood before the door. His face showed unwonted excitement. He said—

"A moment, please!" And she halted, looking at him with dull surprise.

"I came here," said the man, "full of bitterness and scorn and hatred. I came here to face a woman whom I believed to be utterly selfish and heartless—hard as iron. I longed to make her suffer as she had made poor Castle suffer, but I had no hope of it. I—I want to say that I'm sorry. I want to say that I've learnt something. I've seen suffering here to-night as keen and as terrible as any human suffering can be. I've seen absolute despair and I've seen great unselfishness. Thank Heaven I can reward it as it ought to be rewarded. Miss Lindon, part of the story I told you was a lie, a deliberate lie agreed upon between Gerald Castle (only he has another name now) and myself—— No! wait, please! Let me explain. I did

find him as badly off as I told you. He has suffered all I said and more, but at the end of my ten days' nursing he did not die; he recovered sufficiently to be put on board ship for England. He and I agreed that you should be told he was dead. He was dead to you. You had forgotten him. He had seen you kissing another man, and I—well, I had felt constrained to tell him what I knew of you on board ship, that you were eager for a good marriage. So he sent you the Harvest Moon and went away. He loved you still, but you had forgotten him, and there was, he said, no other course. By Heaven, I wager he'll find another course when he receives the cablegram I shall send to-night. I should be able to catch him up at Cape Town."

Lord Ridforth halted there, frowning anxiously, for the girl stood still in her place and stared at him with great and tragic eyes. It was as if he had been speaking in some language she did not know. He moved a step nearer, saying—

"Don't you see? Don't you understand? Castle is not dead. He's not dead at all. He's coming back to you! For Heaven's sake——"

But Miss Lindon gave a sudden little whimpering cry and fell down at his feet. She caught the man by the knees and clung there, hiding her face against him, sobbing and weeping together, and shaking with her sobs. So at last he knew that she understood, and he smiled, but with smarting eyes, as he bent over to raise her.

THE PIPER ON THE HILLS.

A CHILD'S SONG.

THERE sits a piper on the hill
Who pipes the livelong day,
And when he pipes both loud and shrill,
The frightened people say:
"The wind, the wind is blowing up,
'Tis rising to a gale."
The women hurry to the shore
To watch some distant sail.
The wind, the wind, the wind,
The wind is blowing to a gale.

But when he pipes all sweet and low,
The piper on the hill,
I hear the merry women go
With laughter, loud and shrill:
"The wind, the wind is coming south,
'Twill blow a gentle day."
They gather on the meadow-land,
To toss the yellow hay.
The wind, the wind, the wind,
The wind is blowing south to-day.

And in the morn, when winter comes,
To keep the piper warm,
The little Angels shake their wings
To make a feather storm:
"The snow, the snow has come at last!"
The happy children call,
And "ring around" they dance in glee,
And watch the snowflakes fall.
The wind, the wind, the wind,
The wind has spread a snowy pall.

But when at night the piper plays,
I have not any fear,
Because God's windows open wide
The pretty tune to hear;
And when each crowding spirit looks,
From its star window-pane,
A watching mother may behold
Her little child again.
The wind, the wind, the wind,
The wind may blow her home again.

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER.

SIR ARTHUR OF BEETLE ALLEY.

By KATE JORDAN.

"I GUESS that's all right—eggs, bacon, an' he has his own marmalade—— Yes!"

Susan gave a last glance at herself in the kitchen mirror. Her brother Danny's paper collar, which she had appropriated, might have been cleaner—but that was an item. The red cigar ribbon decorating her tightly twisted hair was not what her soul thirsted for, but under the weight of her hard fifteen years she had become a philosopher. But oh, if only her nails could ever be like his! Ah, that was a dream too wonderful to be realised, an ambition that made her dizzy by its enormity.

"Seems to me you're feedin' that sick greenhorn pretty good," said her father, who was pulling on his boots by the sink.

"I guess, pop, he pays fer what he gits," and Susan shuffled out, bearing the tin tray on a level with her wrinkled forehead. "Sick greenhorn, indeed!" she thought angrily and yet with exultation. "I guess some people in this New York alley would throw a fit if they know'd what I know about him—*Sir Arthur Blenmore!*—oh, it's jest grand!"

The room at which she knocked overlooked the yard, and here, by the window, a glint of the spring sun upon him, a young man sat. He was thin, blue-eyed, and graceful, and in health had been handsome. But now his lustreless, sunken eyes told of recent illness. A dark, mongrel dog with a scarred back crouched against him, giving him those servile, adoring glances peculiar to dogs, and some women.

"'Mornin', Sir Arthur," said Susan in a low, confidential tone.

"Good morning, my dear. Thanks, old girl. This is awfully good of you. I say, you haven't brought me chocolate *again?* By Jove!"

Susan seated herself at the dog's side. They were like worshippers blinking at each mouthful he took. He choked on a crust and went into a peal of laughter.

"Oh, if some of my friends could see me now!"

"They'd be surprised," said Susan. "I kin imagine. Say, wuz there an Eyetalian garden at Blenmore Towers, Sir Arthur?"

"Oh, yes. All sorts of gardens."

"Just like in 'A Wasted Love'" said Susan longingly. "An' did the bells ring out when you wuz come of age?"

"By Jove, Susan, how they pealed! I can hear them now in fancy," and Sir Arthur laughed again until creases came into his thin cheeks.

"D'ye think ye'll ever go back to England, an' marry that rich Lady Angelina, an' ast yer crool uncle to fergive yer?" she asked, her expression wistful.

"I'll never marry where I cannot love. No, Susan, no!"

"'Tain't so nice to be a paup," Susan ventured, though she looked happy at his vigorous decision.

"True, my dear. But who would purchase wealth and ease by selling his manliness?" and his blue eyes danced, his white teeth flashed, and his hand with its beautiful nails rested on hers.

Oh, he was wonderful!

"How is the Lady Ysolde getting on these days?" asked Sir Arthur, as he finished his chocolate. "Is she in the madhouse still?"

"Got outer that four numbers ago," said Susan, pulling a soiled story-paper from her apron pocket. "Her feller, Sir Li'nel——"

"Rescued her, of course. He wouldn't have earned his salt as a hero if he hadn't."

She began turning the pages with a busy finger, which she frequently licked.

"When the flames wuz a-crawlin' like great tongues," she read, "he takes her in his great, strong arms, while he holds on to a massive tree——"

"With his feet?"

"'Kiss me once,' he sez in pashnate tones; 'this moment may be our last.' 'Oh, Heavens,' sez Lady Ysolde, as the flames——"

"Susan, give me that paper," Sir Arthur interrupted, and he tore it into small pieces.

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"'So long, Sir Arthur!'"

"Don't look so unhappy, dear. I'll tell you why I did that. I want you to give up reading of that sort. It's rubbish. Lady Ysolde is a hoax. See this book here? Read the name."

"'David Cop—per—field,'" she stammered obediently.

"It doesn't seem to promise much after such refreshment as 'The Twisted Wedding Ring,' or 'The Midnight Crime of the Ebony Chamber,' but oh, Susan, some day you'll love this book!" He laid his hand on hers as a father might have done. "I want you to go back to the night-school next autumn, and it won't be long before you understand what delight there is between these dull, brown covers. Will you, Susan, for my sake?" He drew her nearer, placed his hand under her chin against the points of her paper collar, and looked very tenderly at her. "I'd have died here if it hadn't been for you, little girl. You've been mother and

nurse to me. You're the best friend I have in the world," he said in a burst, and added softly: "I'll never forget this, Susan. Now, then, is the gloom all gone? Are you ready for to-morrow? Oh, don't you hope it will be a fine Sunday? I want your first sight of the country to be a glorious one."

"Oh, Sir Arthur," and Susan clutched her narrow chest ecstatically, "I think I'll go crazy! Oh, you'd oughter see my new lid, too, with a high ostrich stickin' up on it," and the pale eyes in her gaunt, almost elderly face flashed with a joy which warmed the watcher's heart. "We'll go early? Right after breakfast?"

"Just as soon as you can get ready. You'll have your fill of sunshine, in a field of buttercups, Susan. You'll see your new hat in pools that trees lean over; and you'll eat cake and creamy milk until you can't breathe. I say, we'll be a merry pair! I feel as I used to when I was a kiddy, home for the holidays."

"To-morrer?" she gasped, and caught up the tray with a little gasp of joy. "Well, I got to work like a Dago to-day to git away. So long, Sir Arthur!" and she was gone, deftly using her toe to close the door.

That day, as twilight deepened softly, Sir Arthur leaned out of his window, smoking, and felt, even in Beetle Alley, the disturbing magic of the springtime in his blood. But as he looked to the right, the lines of his face settled, his teeth sank into his lower lip, and without knowing it his nails clutched the inner rim of the window-sill as if to keep him from falling. His gaze was fastened on two men who stood in the yard. Both were looking up at him.

He drew back into the room, his eyes fixed on the door, and a silence seemed to creep around him, dividing him from the living with an awesome separateness.

There was a step in the hall. The men who had looked up at him from the yard came in. Even in the dusk, Sir Arthur saw the glint of revolvers in their hands.

"Good evening, Hobbs. Good evening, Ross. How are you?" and he stood before them smiling, his hands in his pockets.

"Good evening to you," said one in a slow, important voice. "We've had a long hunt for you, Barker, very long."

"I scarcely know that name, gentlemen; I've gone up in the world. To my confidential friends I've become Sir Arthur Blenmore," he said airily. "If I light the lamp, gentlemen, you won't shoot me in the back?" He touched the grimy wick with a match and said sharply: "Put your guns out of sight, for Heaven's sake. You've caught me, and I've nowhere to run. Sit down. How did you track me? I fancied I kept pretty close," and he lounged on a corner of the table.

"You did, but nothing is impossible to British law, Barker. Your accurate description and photograph are at every police-station in this city and half-a-dozen others. Sixteen of our best men are on the watch for you. It's a wonder you've jockeyed us so long."

"All this for Billy Barker! You make me tremendously important."

"You are. You're a murderer."

He shivered. His shoulders twitched.

"I never meant to kill him. I only meant——"

"Say nothing, Barker. We'll have to report, you know."

"Well, the game's up. They'll make quick work of me in merry England."

"'Ope for the best. But I say, it's too bad you've been such a bad lot, Barker. You 'ad a good start, too, a clergyman's son, schooling and all the rest of it."

"Yes, I know," he said dully; "but we can't begin over again, can we? What are you going to do with me?"

"We'll put you in a safe place until the boat sails."

For the first time Ross saw on his charge's face the look he was familiar with among prisoners—the strained forehead, the wild eyes.

"Look here," he said, laying his hand on Ross's arm, "I'm going back to England to be tried for my life. There's a favour, perhaps the last, you can do for me."

"All right, if it don't interfere with my duty."

"It's not for myself; but there's a little girl in this human sty who nursed me tenderly when I was almost done for. She's never seen the country, and I promised her a day in the woods and fields to-morrow. You'll let me keep that promise—you will, for Heaven's sake?"

"You must think we're green."

"You don't believe me? Stay here to-night and relieve each other while I sleep. To-morrow, stick to me, one on each side——"

"I tell you, no," said Hobbs impatiently. "It's absolute rot."

But an unexpected thing occurred. Billy Barker hid his face in his hands and groaned as men do from the twist of a surgeon's knife.

"Heavens, if you knew what this means to me!" Then he flung up his head. "Listen! I've always loved children and dogs, and they've seemed to love me. Well, this girl—this scrub of the alleyways—has done more for me than all my saintly father's sermons. She's the first creature that Billy Barker's been a good influence to. I—race-track hanger-on, gambler, yes, even murderer—have been a gentleman of pure life and honour to her. Don't say I can't keep my word to her. She thinks me everything I wish I had been. Let her think so to the last?" and his lips quivered like a woman's.

"Blow me!" said Ross, "who'd have thought B. B. could be so soft?"

The detectives eyed each other uncomfortably. They were against the experiment; but they liked Barker, and the man had the shadow of death upon him. His prayer was still in his eyes.



"In his country, kings and sich like him ain't *allowed* to marry girls like me. It said so in 'Lady Ormond's Sin.'"

"All right," said Ross, and the sudden smile that lit up Barker's face made him know how that sinner had looked in childhood.

The next night Susan arrived home after her pastoral dissipation with a scarlet nose, her hair in limp rings, drunk with sunlight and breeze, tired, but so happy there was something of pain in it.

The next morning, thrilling with the anticipation of discussing the heavenly day, she carried up Sir Arthur's breakfast.

To her surprise the room was empty, and Wriggle, the scarred mongrel, fixed her with one tragic eye. The bed had not been slept in. "David Copperfield" was on the pillow, a letter addressed to her beside it.

"Oh," she sniffed miserably, as she put down the tray, "*scooted!*"

Wriggle waddled over mournfully and wedged himself against her as she tore the envelope. Two folded banknotes fell out, but, for the first time in her life, money was not of primary importance.

"My dear, dear Susan," she read laboriously. "You must not feel badly because I've hurried off to England with my two cousins without saying 'Good-bye.' I couldn't bear the parting. My rich uncle has forgiven me, and no longer insists on my marrying the ugly heiress. Keep on at the night school, Susan. Don't forget to read 'David Copperfield,' and be good to Wriggle, for he loved me. Dear Susan, keep yourself honest and brave. Buy something you want with the money.

"My plans will be settled when I reach England. I may go away to a very far, unknown country, from which no one that I ever heard of has come back, or I may settle down to a quiet life—I may say a life of solitude—for a good many years. At any rate, I shall always be glad that I knew Susan Flynn, and if we ever meet again, I

want to be proud of her. She must never, never forget

"Her admiring, faithful and grateful friend,

"SIR ARTHUR."

Susan, for a long time, sat hunched over the letter. A tear travelled slowly down her blistered nose; her hand fell for a moment on Wriggle's head; a sigh of endurance burst from her, and she began slowly counting the money.

"Forty dollars—*oh, Sir Arthur!*"

She gasped over this Midas gift and thrust it nervously behind the paper collar, into her bosom. Sir Arthur had gone—nothing could alter that desolate fact—but he had left her a fortune; a letter to be cherished while she lived; a book to be read for his sake; a dog to be loved.

"Well," she said, her natural philosophy returning as the tears fell more freely and relieved her heart; "I might 'a' knowed he'd never settle down in this alley to stay. Crool uncles alwuz gits killed by poachers, and leaves all their money to the lovely hero; or else they 'fergive and fergit' like Sir Arthur's—an' that's the way it wuz, too, in 'Fated Far End.'" She lifted a corner of her skirt and wrung her nose. "I wuz a fool to think that maybe—sometime—him and me might—— Why," her thoughts broke off, "in his country, kings and sich like him ain't *allowed* to marry girls like me. It said so in 'Lady Ormond's Sin.'"

She rose, and having carefully folded the letter, pushed it deeply into her stocking. Then she dived suddenly and kissed on his quivering black nose the dog, who, by his melancholy, questioning stare was plainly anxious about his future, now that his protector was gone.

"Wrig," said Susan, her mouth set dramatically as she lifted the tray, "*it's me an' you now aginst the whole world.* Yeh'll have Sir Arthur's chop all by yer lonely, an' if pop, or Danny, or any slob lays so much as a finger on you—*even a pinky*—well, they'll hear something drop, an' they'll wonder what hit 'em. Come on, Wrig."

THE QUEST.

"GO out," she said, "into the dark, and light the poppy fires for me,
And fill their chaliced cups of red with burning flame, that I may see,
And set their torches 'long the road—frail seneschals of green and fire,—
My soul and I are travelling far, toward the 'Land of Heart's Desire.'

"Go out," she said, "into the dark, and beg the nightingale to sing,
And set the alabaster bells of lilies on their spires aswing,
And steal for me one little kiss from the dear mouth of falling dew,
My soul and I are travelling far, toward the 'Land of Dreams Come True.'

"Go out," she said, "into the dark, and build for me a vault of grey,
And bury me, some moonless night, strewed with the flowers of yesterday—
My soul and I have travelled far, on roads of thorn and paths of rue,
There is no 'Land of Heart's Desire,' there is no 'Land of Dreams Come True'!"

ARCHIBALD SULLIVAN.



H. K. FOSTER. W. L. FOSTER. R. E. FOSTER. G. N. FOSTER.

BROTHERS OF THE CRICKET FIELD.

BY SIR HOME GORDON, BART.

Photographs by E. Hawkins & Co., Brighton.

IN one sense every eleven is a brotherhood so long as the members of it are in the field; for unless they have a truly fraternal co-operativeness, they are unlikely to win the match in which they are playing. But in a more literal sense, skill in cricket undoubtedly runs in families.

It is easy to see why this is so. If an elder brother is at all good at the game, he makes his small kinsmen field and bowl to him; also he coaches them from his standard of superiority. Consequently, the members of a large family who have begun by playing cricket keenly, generally improve as the generation develops. I remember no instance of four or five brothers good at the game in which the eldest is the best. Of the Lytteltons, the youngest—the ex-Colonial Secretary—was pre-eminent among many eminent. Of the Graces, "W. G." was the fourth son; of the Steels, "A. G."—known as "Nab"—has played more brilliantly than the rest. So among professionals, Alec Hearne proved the most notable of the brethren, though it is less usual for a whole family of professionals to be noteworthy, because the elder ones generally drift at a comparatively early age from the local village green, so their skill is traditional with, rather than demonstrated to, the younger brothers.

To-day there would not seem to be so many cricketing families before the public as was at one time the case. As examples of success among what Mr. Rudyard Kipling once furiously called "flannelled fools," there is no family which can show the same results as the famous Lytteltons. Lord Cobham, the eldest son, is a noted expert on everything agricultural, Sir Neville Lyttelton attained the great military distinction of being on the Army Council after brave services in the field, Canon Edward Lyttelton, who was captain of the famous Cambridge eleven of 1878, is now the Head Master of Eton, and Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, ex-Colonial Secretary, kept wicket for England in the first Test Match at the Oval. The last-named was the only amateur I ever remember wearing a hard straw hat when he was behind the wicket in a county match.

Then there were the Steels, who all hailed from Liverpool. I met Douglas once in Kerry, and against an eleven of Tralee he made more runs than all the opposing eleven, bowled most of them out, and kept wicket at the end at which he was bowling. "A. G." of that ilk was so great a cricketer that to praise him would be superfluous. "H. B." was a powerful hitter who never obtained his "Blue" at Cambridge, and "E. E."—who bowled not many seasons back for the Gentlemen at the Oval—still goes annually on a tour against the public schools.

Always associated with the Steels will be the Studds, another family splendid in every respect. Three attained distinction in the game. Mr. J. E. K. Steel, though never so good as the other two, was a capital run-getter, and is now the moving spirit of that great institution, the Polytechnic. Mr. G. B. Steel was a really beautiful bat to watch, and so good a field that his occasional uncertainty in

holding a catch was positively disconcerting. The finest was Mr. C. T. Studd, who cut short his career in the field in order to become a missionary in China. He was a very good bat and a capital slow bowler, as typical an Eton cricketer as one could wish to point out. Mr. H. W. Studd, who went into the Guards, would have been quite good enough to have bowled for his University had he gone up.

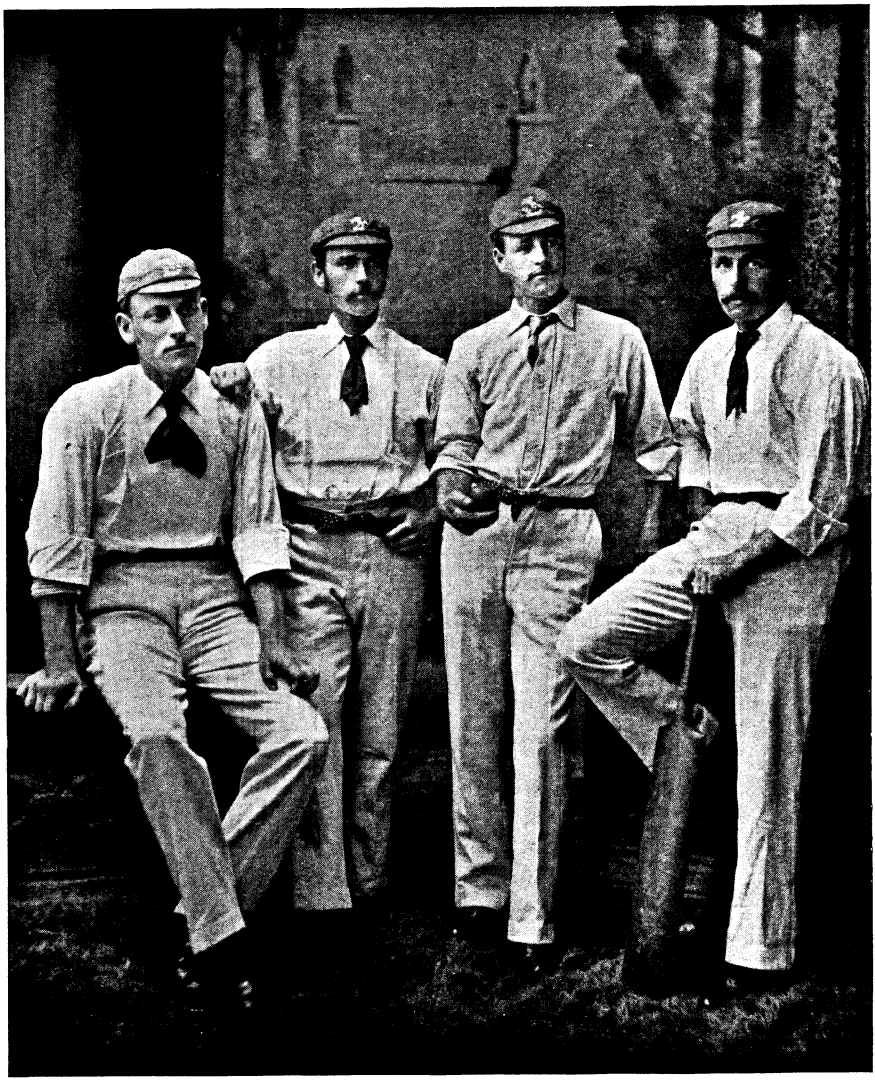
The Walkers were all before my day, except "Donny," the youngest, the late Mr. I. D. Walker, beloved by everyone; such an energetic, capable, unorthodox, and excellent run-getter, and, like all his family, an enthusiastic patron of the game. Marshams, in the elder generation, and Lubbocks were long prior to my recollection, but I saw many of the Lucases. They and the Christophersons both played elevens composed of the same family, though not all brothers. Mr. A. P. Lucas was a cousin of the more numerous branch. He was a splendid bat, and, though often kept out of the field by illness early in his career, actually played in county cricket with distinction after he had passed his fiftieth year. The late Mr. F. M. Lucas, in the opinion of many judges, was the finest left-handed batsman who ever appeared within living memory. By the way, Mr. R. Slade Lucas was no relation, nor did that distinguished batsman, Mr. J. G. Walker, belong to the family that had made his surname a household word in cricket.



DR. E. M. GRACE. DR. W. G. GRACE.

Of course, "W. G." was the greatest cricketer that ever was or ever will be. That is an axiom of cricket faith. But he was the fourth of a family of five. I remember seeing all the three Graces in the field together. All three were chosen for the first Test Match, in which poor G. F. Grace, if my recollection is correct, brought off a phenomenal catch. Mr. Bonnor hit a ball as high, or higher, than any cricket-ball was ever lifted, and G. F. Grace secured it. A fortnight later he was dead from the effects of a damp bed at Chichester, and when the Players met the Australians at the Crystal Palace, they all wore black on the left sleeve of their shirts for him. To write of "W. G." as a cricketer would be to paint the rose. Until last year, when he had a bad illness and was sixty-seven, Dr. E. M. Grace regularly took his hundred wickets (with underhands) and scored his thousand runs in club cricket. Before the advent of "W. G.," "the Crowner" was absolutely the best bat in England and, one is tempted to say, was never equalled at point. Yet what points one can recall: Sir Timothy O'Brien, Messrs. J. G. Walker, T. S. Pearson, G. H. S. Trott, M. A. Noble, F. Laver, with Barlow and poor Arthur Shrewsbury among others. Somehow, directly one mentions "W. G.," however, one wants to write a volume on him, which reminds me that everybody who expends sixpence on "W. G.'s Little Book" will derive five-shillings' worth of pleasure therefrom.

The Hearnes were the earliest of the modern type of professional. I have many admiring memories of the older school of county "pro.," often a fine cricketer,



RANDOLPH HEARNE. FRANK HEARNE. ALEC HEARNE. GEORGE GIBBONS HEARNE.

invariably a keen one. But between him and the paid section of to-day there is a gap. It used to be said of some of the older professionals that their flannels really were washed during the winter, whilst several of the very cleverest professionals of that time were their own worst enemies. Now all that is altered, but I am inclined to think the Hearnes were the pioneers of the smart, trim, self-respecting men we respect and like to-day. "Wisden's" is the annual Bible of cricketers, but in the late 'seventies it had a curious literary flavour, full of enthusiasms and italics. Its encomiums were lavished on G. G. Hearne, and right well the praise was deserved. Perhaps many are not aware that the Hearnes had a Middlesex qualification.

Frank Hearne settled at the Cape, and the use he has been to the development of South African cricket cannot be exaggerated. There could never be better types of coaches than the Hearnes. Of Alec, Lord Harris has written, "too much cannot be said; for, though apparently of most delicate physique, he has stood more than twenty years of county cricket, doing much bowling as well as playing many big innings." Of the accompanying photograph an anecdote may be told. I could not name the Hearne on the left of the group of brothers,

and therefore I took it to Lord's, and nearly every member of the ground staff had a puzzled look at it. Finally one told me: "That's Randolph Hearne, sir, who went to Scotland early." I confess I never heard of him, but there he is, with a strong family likeness too. Another Hearne, Walter by name, had his career cut short by a sprained knee just when he proved himself one of the best medium-paced bowlers in England. He was a cousin of the brothers; so was J. T. Hearne, the best length bowler since Attewell, and the most patiently persevering of all. The Hearnes have excited a feeling of friendliness to such a cordial extent that no other family of professionals has yet collectively rivalled it.

The Gunns have done a lot for Notts and all three have played for England, the only three professionals of one family who have earned this distinction. William Gunn, the uncle, six feet several inches in height, was a fine outfield and still finer bat until he absolutely concealed his great powers as a natural hitter. John Gunn, the elder nephew, trained on slowly, but in four seasons has accomplished the double feat of taking a hundred wickets and making a thousand runs. He has twice taken part in county partnerships exceeding 350 runs. His health has not been of the best, nor has that of George Gunn, who as supernumerary to the last M.C.C. eleven in Australia ended as he began, with a century in a Test Match. He is a particularly scientific bat, and, like John, plays left-handed.

The three brothers Crawford are sons of the Rev. J. C. Crawford, and afford an instance of hereditary talent. "V. F. S." was the Hutchings of Surrey cricket until he migrated to Leicestershire, in which county team his success has been intermittent. "R. T." is utilitarian in every department. "J. N." was the youngest cricketer who has ever played in a Test Match for England. He is a capital bowler, a dangerous bat and safe field, though he plays in spectacles. Good as he is, he has hardly shown his best in representative games, and in these is less of a match-winning cricketer than in less important matches. All the Crawfords were phenomenal boy performers.

It is with regret that I look at the photographs of the two Beldams, who are cousins, because they are now never seen in the ranks of Middlesex. My friend George Beldam is the brainiest cricketer I ever met, full of theories and a conjuror with the camera. I should say he was the dourest batsman who never was tried for his university (Cambridge), and his bowling could perplex, especially with a new ball. His cousin, Mr. E. A. Beldam, has played but little cricket, but personally I recall a rattling Bank Holiday century against Somersetshire, made whilst he was a particularly active outfield.

The brothers Douglas are among the proudest cricketing traditions of Dulwich. Personally I never saw the eldest brother bat, but have been told he would have been as good as his juniors had he not entered the Service. Mr. R. N. Douglas particularly recalled the attractive batting methods of Lord Darnley. He made the best use of his fine height and was as stylish as could be desired. Mr. "Jimmie" Douglas annually comes into Middlesex cricket each August as invigorating and as skilled as Mr. Ernest Smith used to be for Yorkshire. It is to be noted that these two brothers were among the rejected of Surrey. From schooldays they were consistently excellent.

Even brighter cricket has been shown by those Malvernians, the Days. It is a curious fact that in their first-class career the two brothers average precisely the same, for the public never seem to have thought Mr. A. P. Day the equal of his brother. Mr. S. H. Day for years has been one of the best forcing bats of the day, his strokes being very punishing all round the wicket. Another pair of brothers all too little seen were the Druces. Their first-class career practically ended when they came down from Cambridge, though each has been seen in a stray match since. Mr. W. G. Druce was a fair wicket-keeper and a formidable, upstanding run-getter. Mr. Norman F. Druce was one of the very prettiest rapid-scoring batsmen who has ever played in big matches. Unfortunately his love for the game was not equal to his skill, or, to put it more accurately, he loved cricket as a pastime and hated the business of first-class matches.

The most beautiful stylist of modern times has, of course, been Mr. Lionel Palairet, a model of elegance and attractiveness. The serviceable cricket of his brother was much impeded by a bad hunting accident. Any mention of Mr. Lionel Palairet must suggest Mr. R. H. Spooner, potentially a great player, actually the best illustration of the champagne of the game. No one in the last fifteen years has been comparable to him. He plays delightfully all round

the wicket, and his off-driving is wonderful. His Test Match innings at the Oval was a masterpiece, and he can never have had a superior at cover-point. He was among the many cricketers who served in the South African war. Pressure of business keeps his brother from the game, but Mr. A. F. Spooner's sound judgment in making 83 v. Essex, handicapped by a severe blow on the knee, must not be forgotten.

Australian brothers, as a rule, have shown inequality in cricket excellence. This was shown in Mr. Clement Hill and his younger brother; also in a marked disparity between Mr. George Giffen and Mr. Walter Giffen. On the other hand, that wonderful bowler, Mr. Hugh Trumble, was on a higher plane than Mr. J. W. Trumble. Both the famous Bannermans were equally



J. GUNN. G. GUNN.



G. W. BELDAM. A. E. BELDAM.
(*First cousins.*)

renowned, and though Albert Trott has been more of a popular idol over here, he never had half the craftiness of his elder brother, one of the very best captains ever seen and a mighty cricketer.

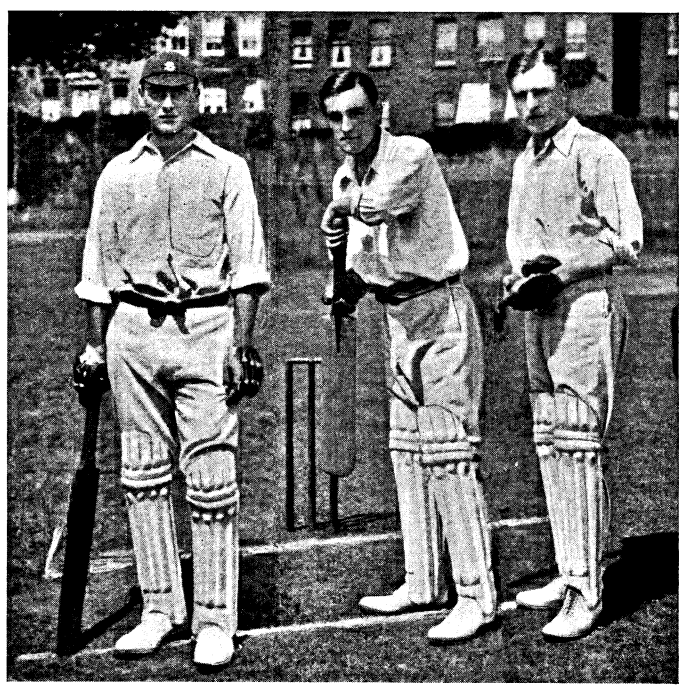
Two pairs of twins have yet to win fame at cricket; still, the promise of Messrs. Stephens for Warwickshire and of Messrs. Denton for Northamptonshire augurs well if they have time to devote to county fixtures. Messrs. Poyntz are useful when they can play for Somersetshire, and Messrs. Barnett for Gloucestershire. Ireland has never taken kindly to cricket, but the Hones and the Gwynns are families who have done much to promote the game across the Channel. Poor Mr. N. Hone was accidentally poisoned soon after he kept wicket for Cambridge, and the early death of Mr. Lucius Gwynn removed a really great bat. His innings for the Gentlemen at the Oval is a cherished memory for those lucky enough to

have witnessed it. Whenever the chronicles of Warwickshire are written, the batting of the brothers Quaife will loom largely therein. If it has provoked less general enthusiasm than it deserved, this is attributable to the slow methods by which the long scores of the younger and greater bat were amassed.

Two families remain to be touched upon. Worcestershire has not inaptly been called Fostershire, and it is enormously indebted to the sons of the Malvern schoolmaster. Major W. L. Foster is a defensive bat of formidable capacity. Mr. R. E. Foster, the finest bat of the family, possesses almost every quality, strong defence, self-restraint, free, attractive style, and wonderful wrist-shots. He has carried pulling to a fine art. As for his work in the University match and for the Gentlemen, it will never be erased from the golden page of cricket lore. In his first Test Match at Sydney he compiled the huge innings of 287, and after a shaky start his play was beyond criticism. Mr. Basil Foster, who is on the stage, is a lively run-getter, and more might be seen with advantage of Mr. M. K. Foster, who only needs to get going to show the ability in him, for at Malvern he did as well as any of his elder brothers. All the Fosters have been splendid fieldsmen, the elders, perhaps, specialising at short slip. One, the ex-Oxonian, Mr. G. N. Foster, is now in India.

"The transmission of genius" is the phrase in which a Sunday paper alluded to the fine flavour of cricket rendered by Mr. A. J. Evans in the University match. This freshman of abundant promise is a son of Mr. A. H. Evans, who was the Oxonian terror to Cantab Steels, Studds, Darnley, Ford, Roe, and others. Moreover, he is first cousin to Mr. W. H. B. Evans, recently an Oxford captain, who is playing for the Gentlemen when on leave from Khartoum. If you come to think of it, it is an enormous compliment to select for the two exhibition matches of the year a man who has not been playing half-a-dozen times in the season. That no one should murmur shows how thoroughly this tribute to real ability is endorsed.

In conclusion, here are the life batting



J. N. CRAWFORD. R. T. CRAWFORD. V. F. S. CRAWFORD.

averages in this country, since 1878 up to 1909, of some of the heroes just enumerated :

	Runs.	Average.
Steel, A. G.	5,676	25·176
Studd, C. T.	4,103	35·43
Studd, G. B.	2,805	25·30
Studd, J. E. K.	1,643	19·47
Lucas, A. P.	7,905	25·91
Lucas, F. M.	1,261	33·7
Grace, Dr. E. M.	6,672	17·42
Grace, Dr. W. G.	35,791	34·28
Hearne, Alec.	16,273	21·87
Hearne, G. G.	8,132	18·320
Gunn, G.	5,956	31·84
Gunn, J.	10,686	30·97
Gunn, W.	24,899	35·01
Crawford, J. N.	4,475	31·08
Crawford, V. F. S.	10,009	26·40
Beldam, G.	6,562	29·82
Douglas, J.	8,195	31·41
Day, A. P.	2,620	29·11
Day, S. H.	6,545	29·88
Palairet, L. C. H.	15,767	32·44
Spooner, R. H.	7,428	34·38
Foster, H. K.	13,359	36·20
Foster, G. N.	3,279	30·64
Foster, W. L.	1,763	32·64
Foster, R. E.	8,059	40·90
Evans, W. H. B.	2,760	30·66

Such a goodly record as this shows how finely the brethren have distinguished themselves with the bat, whilst the bowling figures are equally excellent, but cannot be inserted owing to the editorial instruction to declare this innings closed forthwith.

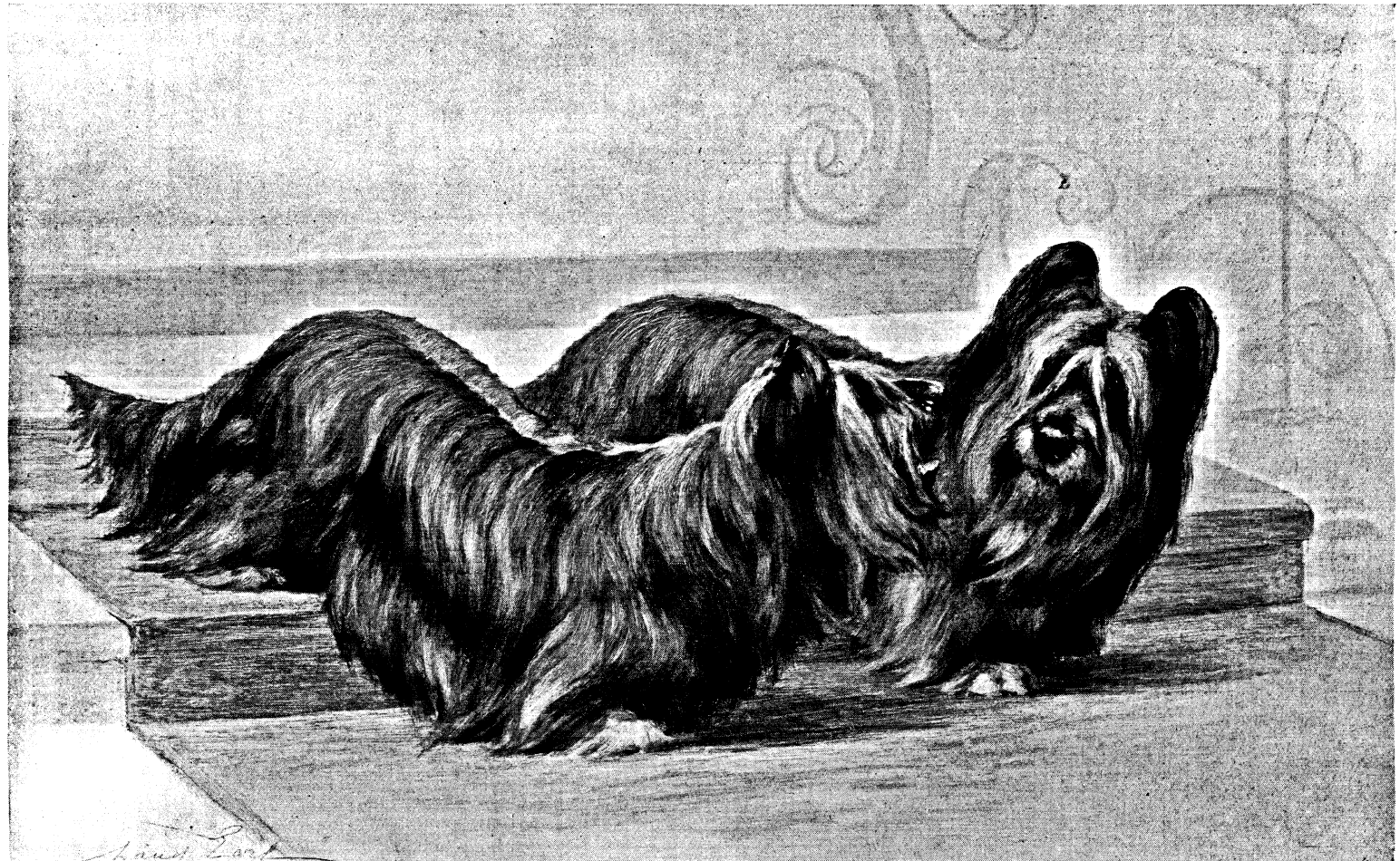
DARTMOOR.

THE giant tors, like sleeping lions, spread
Their titan forms beneath the stooping clouds,
Or, like some fortressed city, silent, dread;
The opal mist each kingly crest enshrouds;
Where rushing streamlets, to the song of bees,
Meet in the vale, and go to seek the seas.

The heather's purple veil rests o'er the moors,
And bracken turns from green to russet brown,
Waving its stately plumes to the distant tors.
The clear, keen breezes blow from sea to down,
And cotton grasses hide the deadly swamp
Hung o'er the wanderer's grave, a starry lamp.

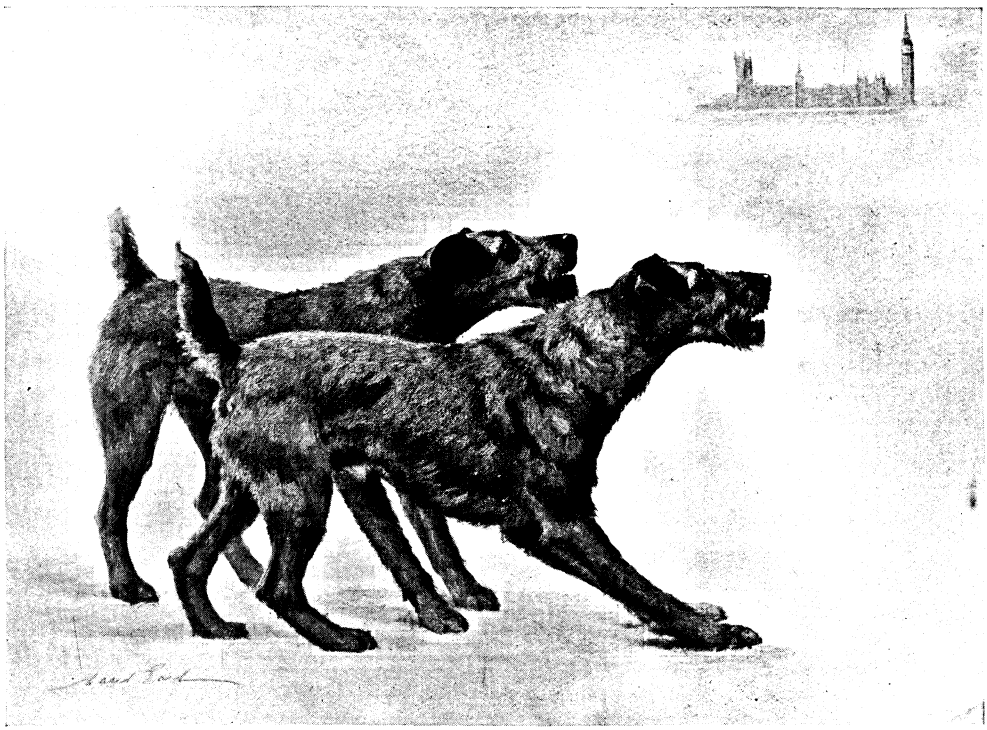
O land of mystic breath, silent, apart,
Where prison walls face grim old rocks of grey,
Where littleness falls off like some false art,
Where souls are born, where Nature holds her sway—
O land where hope revives and sorrows cease—
Abiding place of Beauty and of Peace!

DRUSILLA MARY CHILD.



"THE HEAVENLY TWINS." SKYE TERRIERS CHAMPION "BALLOCHMYLE BEAUTIFUL" AND CHAMPION "YOUNG ROSEBERY."

Owner: Sir Claud Alexander, Bart.



IRISH TERRIERS CHAMPION "MILE END MUDDLER" AND CHAMPION "MUNSTER GRIP."
Owner: Frank Clifton, Esq.

TERRIERS AND TOYS.

By S. L. BENSUSAN.

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MAUD EARL,

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THE late Lord Brampton, best known to the world at large as Mr. Justice Hawkins, declared when his favourite terrier, Jack, died that he had lost the truest friend he ever had, and there can be no doubt that small dogs of a kind that can be kept in the house are growing steadily in popularity, and tend to become the delight of their owners. It was only the other day that the writer, on the Riviera, was astonished and not a little disgusted to see the extraordinary attention that was lavished upon toy dogs by many of the visitors at Monte Carlo and its neighbourhood. Pugs, Toy Poodles, Pekinese, and Toy Spaniels were being waited upon as though they were human beings of high degree. It was no uncommon sight to see some toy dog carried on a velvet cushion by a servant, who seemed to have no other duties in life than to attend to the reigning pet, to feed it on luxuries that would restore an invalid to vigour, and minister to its wants with the devotion and skill of a good valet. Inquiry among the people who keep these dogs has proved that the attention given to them is founded very largely upon affection, and upon the extraordinary response that the pets make to their proper owners. It cannot be doubted that though the tendency of the modern breeder

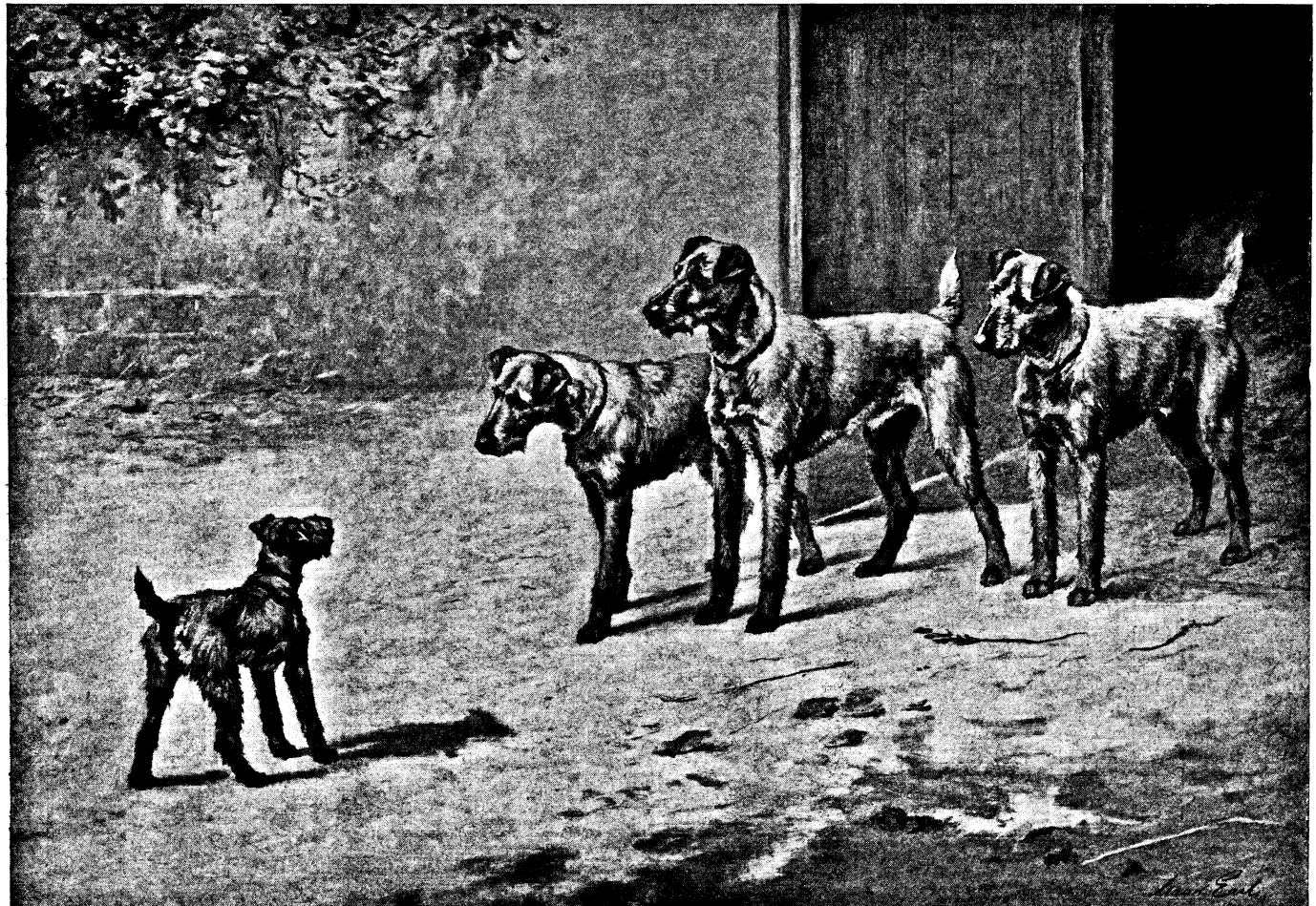


HIS MAJESTY THE KING'S IRISH TERRIER "JACK."

of "Toys" does not lie in the direction of raising strong, vigorous animals, it results in the creation of pets that have quite a number of points that will please the owner. The prices that some will fetch when the show bench has been visited successfully are astonishing.

Of the terrier there is no need to say much. The Fox-terriers are recognised as excellent companions, good house-dogs, and keen sportsmen. The Scottish, Irish, and Welsh varieties are not far behind, but in the case of these dogs the breeders have done nothing to deprive them of any natural capacity for hard work and endurance they may possess. As far as the Scottish variety is concerned, it may claim to be the oldest family of its kind in Scotland, and to have gained its grit and endurance in the wilds of the Highlands, where all sorts of vermin must be kept down and the roughest country must be explored. Originally it had bent forelegs, but by dint of careful selection and treatment it goes straight to-day. The Irish terrier is not far behind his Scottish brother, perhaps a little too heavy and clumsy to fulfil all the requirements of his sporting owner, but a good companion, with a keen love for every kind of sport.

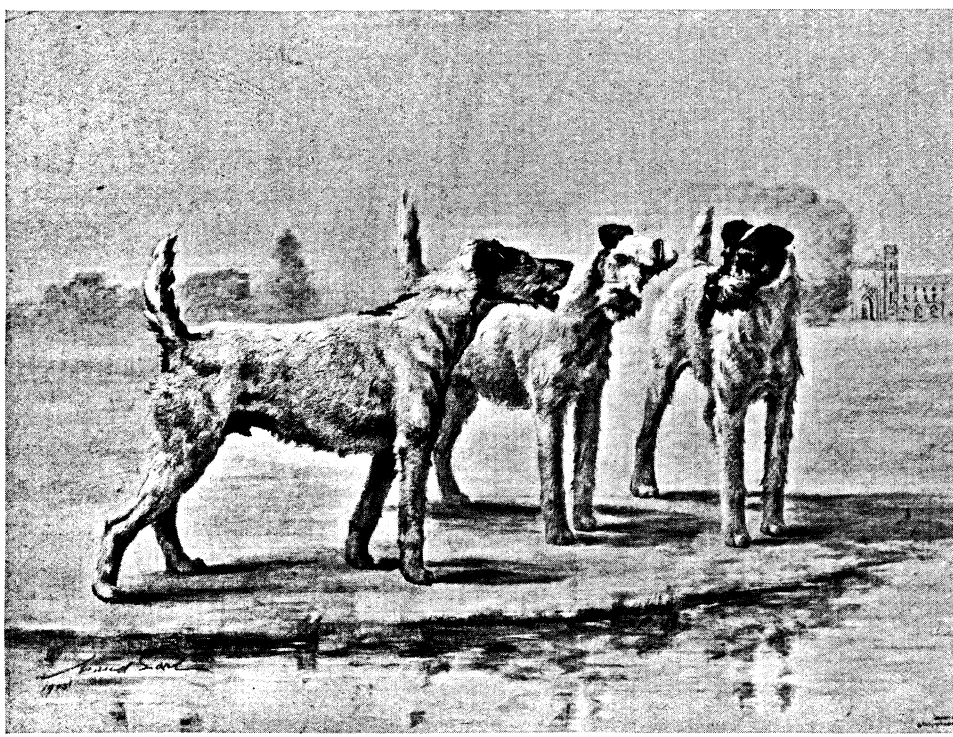
When we come to toy spaniels and poodles we find rather different creatures, and are forced to believe that their present instincts and habits are quite artificial. The original English toy spaniel would seem to have been a King Charles or a Blenheim. The black, tan and white variety was, as is well known, a favourite dog of King Charles II., while the orange and white toy spaniel, known as the Blenheim, has long been raised to the judges' standard of perfection at the



"A COUNCIL OF PERFECTION."

Duke of Marlborough's country seat and in that neighbourhood. Some good judges are of opinion that the toy spaniel of to-day, now helpless and dependent upon the ministrations of man, was once a hardy little sporting dog with a good nose. He was used for raising pheasants lying in thick cover. Needless, perhaps, to say that neither a King Charles nor a Blenheim would serve many sporting purposes to-day. The demands of the drawing-room differ too widely from those of the fields and woods.

England for crossing with terriers. The whippet is said to be the fruit of this union, and a very good fruit, too. The Italian greyhound is exceedingly delicate in cases where there has not been plenty of new blood in the pedigree, under other circumstances it is quite hardy. At the same time it must be confessed that the dog serves no other purpose than that of a pet. It has a beautiful action, and is pleasing to watch, but it would puzzle even the most devoted owner to find any use for it. Happily it



"SENIOR WRANGLERS."

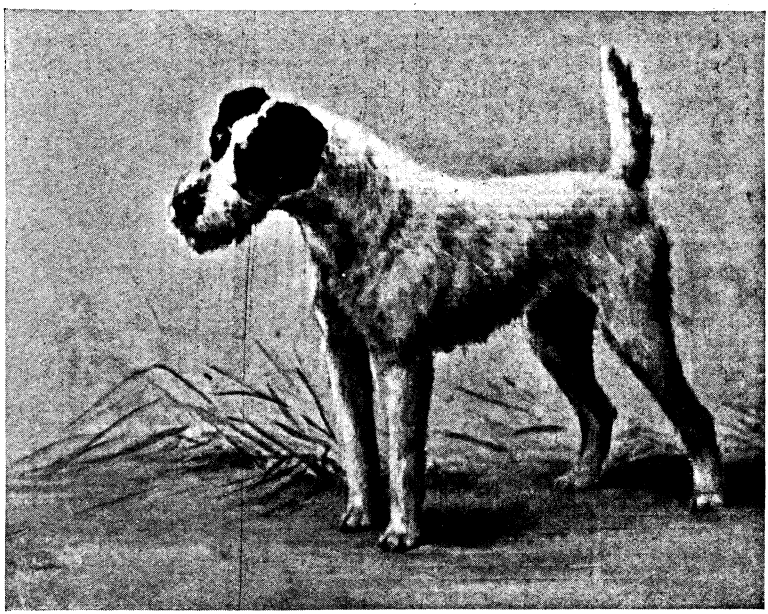
The beautiful Italian greyhound has, of course, few or none of the qualities associated with the English grey. It seems to have come into England with the Stuarts, perhaps a little earlier, but it must have been well known in the European courts at an earlier date, for several artists have painted great rulers and princes accompanied by Italian greyhounds. One of these beautiful little animals may be seen in a picture by Velasquez in the Prado Gallery in Madrid. Although the dog is called an Italian greyhound, it would seem to have come in the beginning from the South of France, and has been used extensively in the North of

seems quite content to live on the fat of the land and be petted.

The Pekinese is a diminutive spaniel, generally fawn coloured, with a curly tail and a long coat. It is a great favourite with many ladies, requires a great deal of attention, and failing that attention, even in a slight degree, is given to retire promptly to another world. They say that the Pekinese spaniel deserves its name, because it came originally from Pekin, being brought over here after one of the expeditions that the Powers of Europe have made from time to time in the alleged interests of the higher civilisation. Certainly these dogs are as costly as the

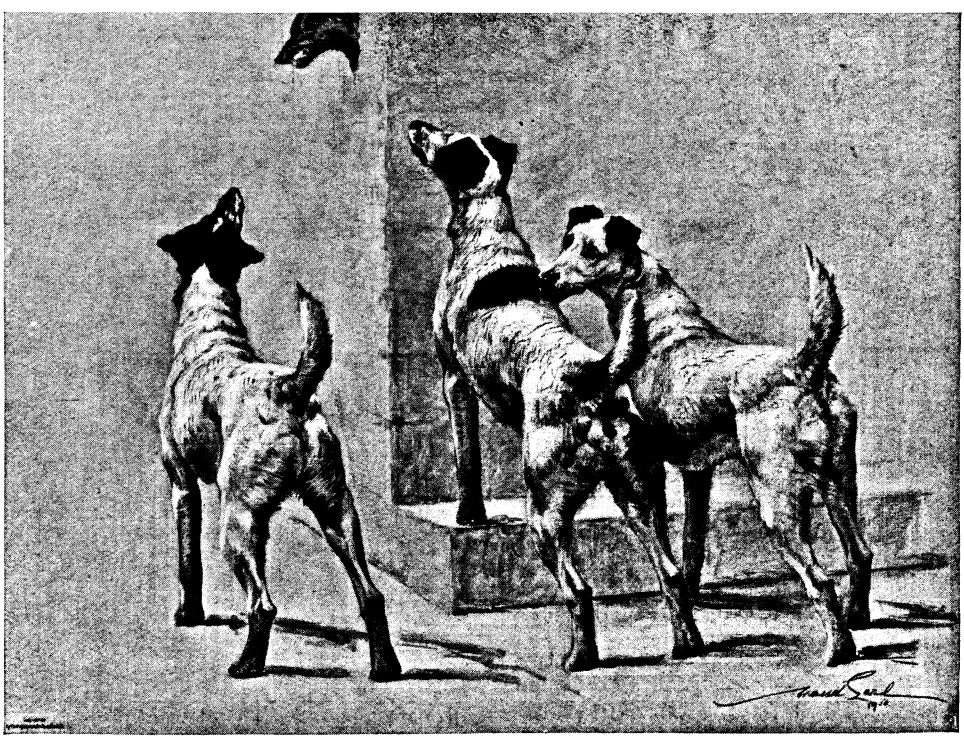
wealthiest collector can desire, and though they are said to have many attractions for the owner, their charms are certainly hidden from the stranger who ventures to approach them.

The Belgian Griffon is a blend of half-a-dozen toy dogs, spaniel, bull, pug, and others. His real origin would puzzle an expert genealogist, and his chief claim to endure would seem to lie in the fact that he can represent so many strains in a small compass.



"BRIC-À-BRAC."
Owner: Miss Hatfield.

The Schipperke is, as his name implies, a Dutch dog, and has not been in England very long. He may be found on many of the boats that ply along the waterways of Holland, a great favourite with those

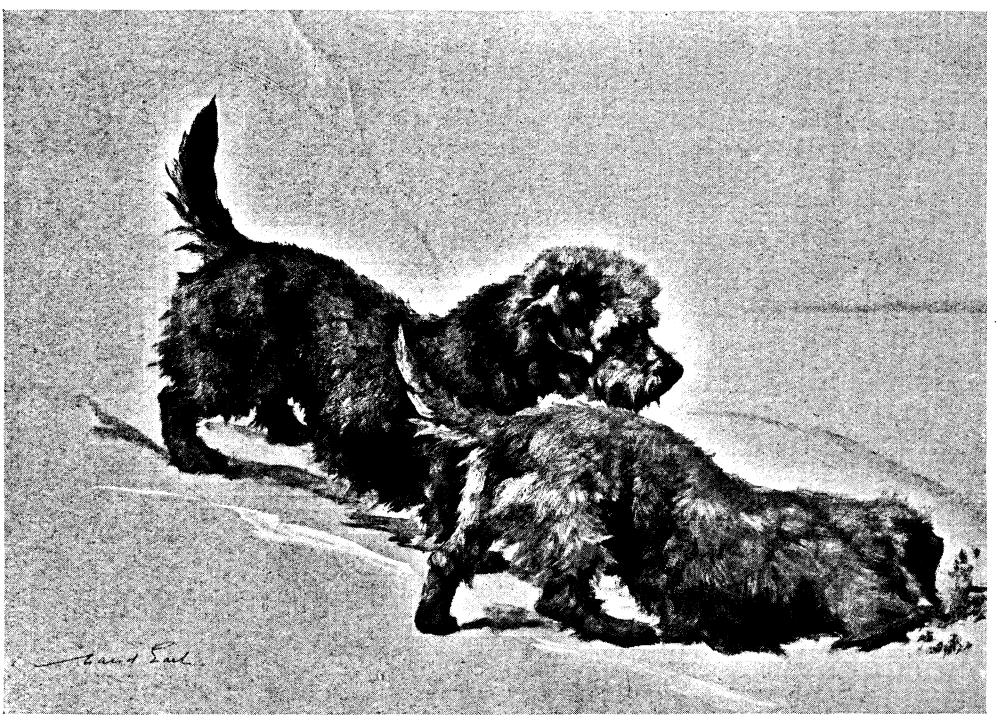


"A MASKED FOE."

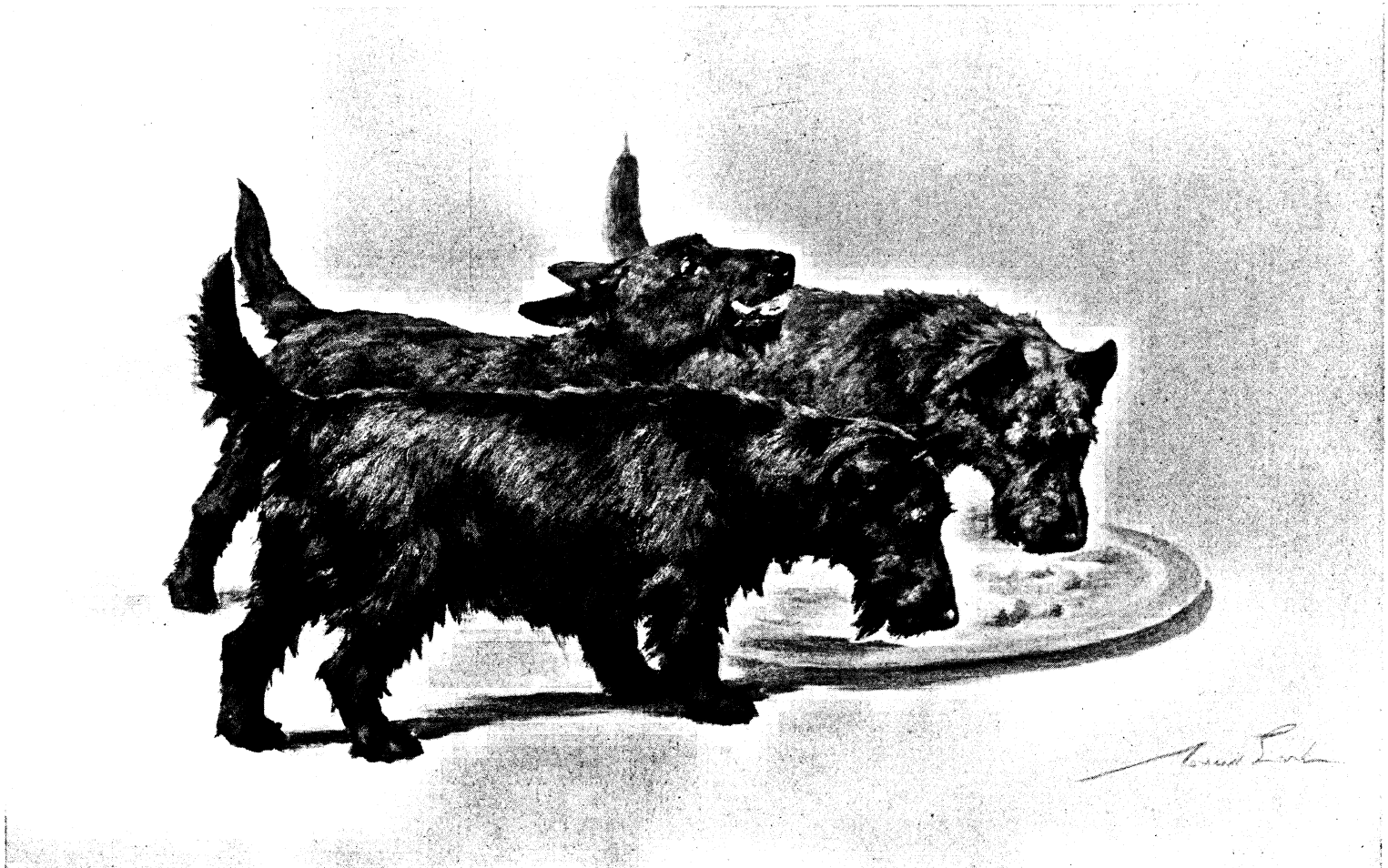
who labour on the canals. In fact, it was there that the writer first saw one. His enthusiastic owner offered to make a considerable bet that his pet would catch and kill rats quicker than any terrier, and the writer would have backed his own Scottish terrier against any dog in Holland; but as Turk was far away in England, it was impossible to make a match, although there is every reason to believe that the Dutchman would have lost his bet. The Schipperke is an attractive little fellow enough, bright, lively, quick, fond of sport, and well able to endure exposure. From the sportsman's standard he has many points in common with a good Scottish terrier. Time was when he was a great favourite in this country. That would be, perhaps, in the very early 'nineties, but since then he has fallen from favour a little, because the average sporting man does not know his value, and the people who are looking for pet dogs prefer some of the more popular types.

In connection with valuable toy dogs, there is a story that is worth telling. When the late Li Hung Chang was visiting London, a leading light of the Stock Exchange, who lived less than ten miles from Carlton House Terrace, made up his mind to send a valuable present to the great Chinese diplomat. After careful consideration, he decided he could not do better than send him two of his most valuable toy dogs. They were selected with great care and sent to Li Hung Chang, from whom a letter of thanks was received a few days later. "Your gift is much appreciated," wrote the celebrated Chinese envoy, "but unfortunately my age and health compel me to adopt a very rigid diet. Under these circumstances, I directed that the dogs should be prepared for some members of my staff, who have enjoyed them very much."

The poodle is the sort of dog that would seem to have been created to satisfy all demands. He is to be found in all sizes, and a good many colours. Sometimes he has a curly coat, and sometimes it is a long corded one. He may be trimmed into almost as many shapes as a yew hedge, and he seems to endure with patience and resignation all the troubles that come upon him through his capacity to learn tricks and the temptations his coat offers to the expert barber.



"A SEARCH PARTY." DANDIES CHAMPION "BRAW LAD" AND "THROSTLE."
Owner: Mrs. Spencer.

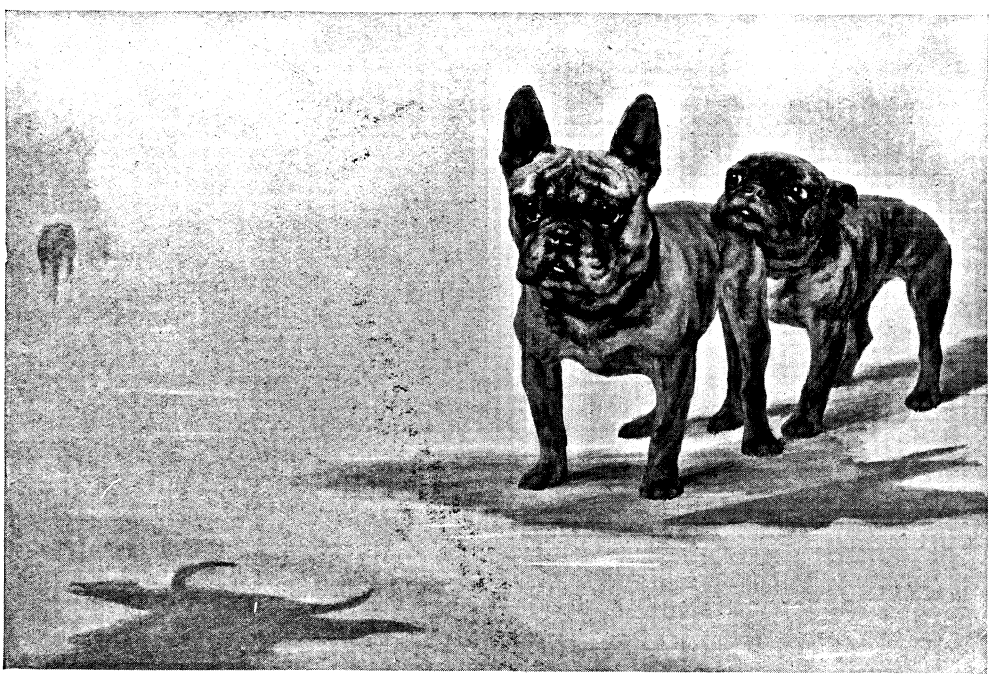


"A FEAST OF FAT THINGS." SCOTTISH TERRIERS CHAMPION "HEWORTH RASCAL," "HEWORTH CHIEFTAIN," AND "HEWORTH QUEEN."

Owner: Mrs. Hannay.

His origin is lost in the mists of antiquity. It would seem quite likely that he went into the Ark with Noah, and that his tricks lightened the tedium of the sojourn in the neighbourhood of Mount Ararat. In addition to learning all manner of tricks, he is a good sporting dog, and can retrieve splendidly. Unfortunately for him his gifts have made him the special prey of the animal-trainer. Nearly all the men who go about from one capital of Europe to another giving trained animal performances rely to no small extent upon poodles, because in addition to his natural ability and quickness, the poodle is a very long-suffering animal, and can endure more training than almost any other creature of his size. He can be broken in to perform the most ridiculous tricks. Perhaps to speak of his size is a little misleading, because he can be found weighing five or six stones, or five or six pounds, according to the wishes of those who desire to buy. Poodles can be trained to walk on the tight-rope, to turn double somersaults, and perhaps their chief fault lies in the fact that they are trimmed and cropped until they look quite stupid. It may not be generally known that you can find poodle specialists in London, men who earn quite a good living by trimming these dogs according to the taste, or lack of taste, of the owners. Theirs is one of the curious occupations that are unheard of by most men and women.

Like the Schipperke, the pug is said to be of Dutch descent. He has always been a great favourite with the ladies, and there have been times when their admiration for him has taken a rather unfortunate form. For instance, it was customary for a very long time to crop a pug dog's ears.



"ENGLAND EXPECTS." TOY BULLDOGS CHAMPION "PETER AMOS" AND CHAMPION "NINON DE L'ENCLOS."

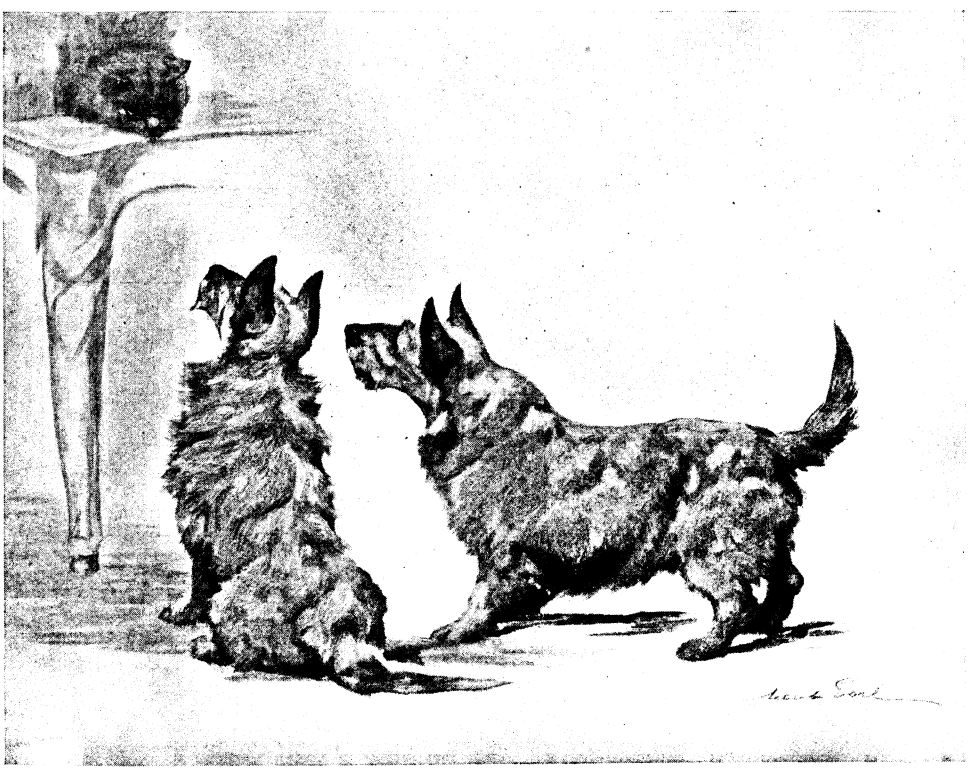
Owner: The Lady Kathleen Pilkington.

When we consider how many devices have been practised upon unfortunate dogs from time to time in response to the demands of fashion, the pug cannot be held to have fared worse than many of his fellows. Happily there is a very strong feeling against the mutilation of all animals to-day, although the tails of some dogs suffer, and we are assured quite solemnly that a dog does not mind docking—in fact, we have heard it suggested that the unfortunate animal is really quite indifferent to the process. There was a time when the pug enjoyed a position from which other toy dogs have now ousted him.



"THE BLACK WATCH." SCHIPPERKE CHAMPION "FANDANGO."

Owner: Dr. Freeman.



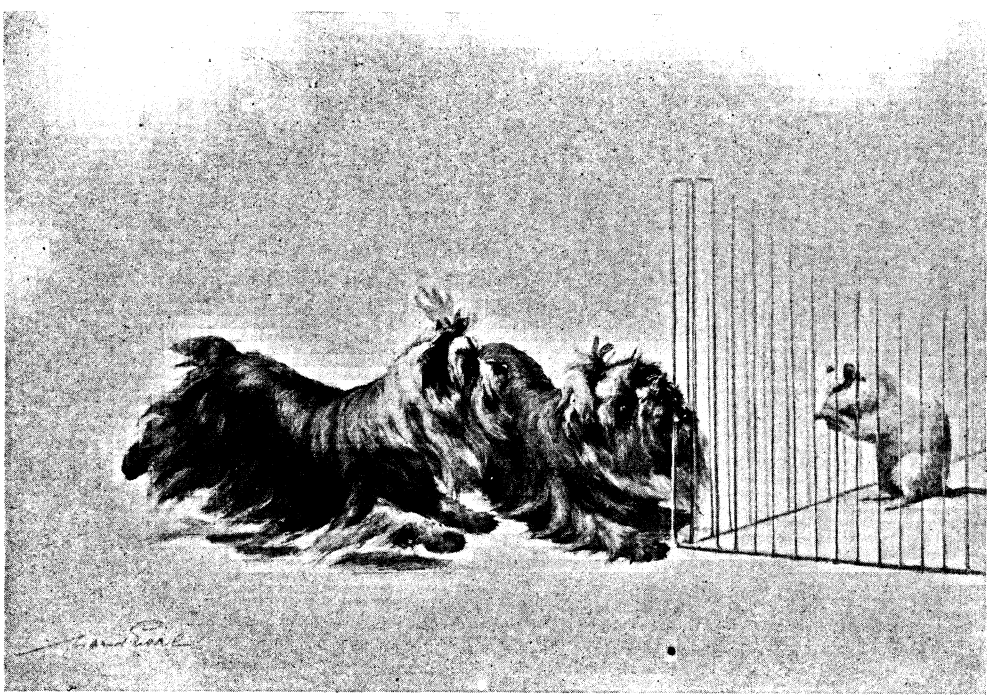
"A RULING FROM THE CHAIR." WHITE SCOTTISH TERRIERS "CHEEKY" AND "GLEN."

Owner: The Lady Angela Forbes.

He was the pet *par excellence* for many years, and very popular with women of fashion. Attempts to vary the size, shape, and weight can be recorded, and in the early 'eighties a pug dog club was established in London to regulate the future of an animal that must be deemed quite unattractive to all save its owner. At the same time it must be confessed that the pug might be a good bit better than it is if it were allowed to develop all its possibilities. The pug has quite a marked instinct for sport, and is more fond of open air exercise than are most pet dogs.

gun Bob would give a little howl of dismay and scamper home. Nor would any amount of persuasion avail to persuade him to follow his owner if any stranger with a gun chanced to be present.

Among terriers the largest is, of course, the Airedale. He is not a pure-bred, the otter-hound entering largely into his composition. He weighs forty pounds or more, and is, of course, a fine sporting dog, as well as a household pet. The Airedale is very popular in the North of England, where perhaps his one serious rival is the Bedlington



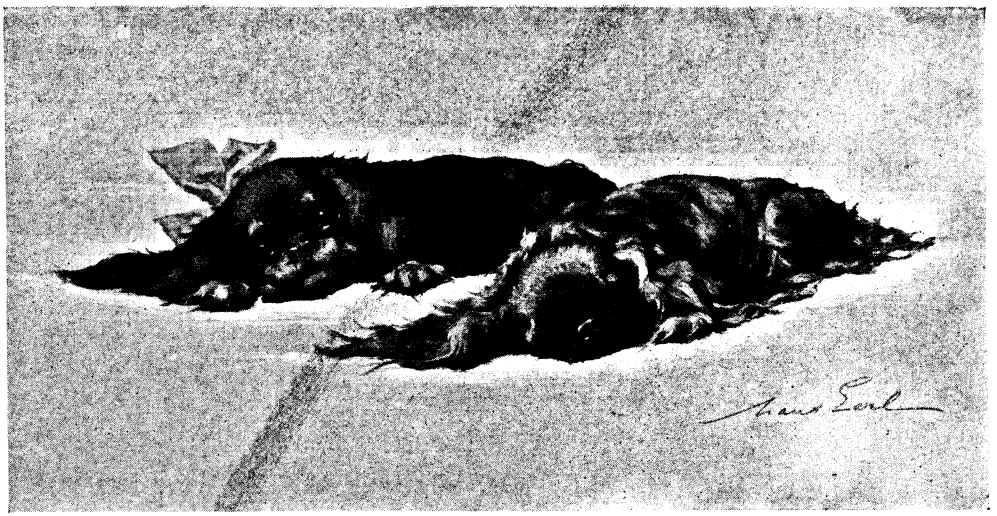
"A COIGN OF VANTAGE." YORKSHIRE TERRIERS "DINO OF RADNAGE" AND "DANDY OF RADNAGE."

Owner: Mrs. Charles Chapman.

If overfed and allowed to get into an unhealthy condition, the pug is as disagreeable a dog as may be met with in the course of a long day; but properly trained and not overfed, the pet is really much better than he looks, and develops into an affectionate companion, with many of the instincts of a good house-dog. The writer knew a pug that would have been quite a first-class sporting dog but for the unfortunate fact that he was gun-shy. He would go into a hedge after rabbits, would kill a rat with something like a terrier's skill, and would retrieve a bird, but at the first sound of the

terrier, a great companion of the miners of Northumberland and Cumberland.

The Bedlington seems to serve all purposes. He is used for racing, for rabbit coursing, as well as for ratting, and he responds to all these demands with great eagerness. To his master the Bedlington is a constant companion and faithful friend so long as his jealousy is not aroused, but he will not tolerate the presence of another dog in his immediate neighbourhood, nor will he share his master's affections with any rival if a good strong fight will put that rival out of court for all time. A reliable house-dog, a

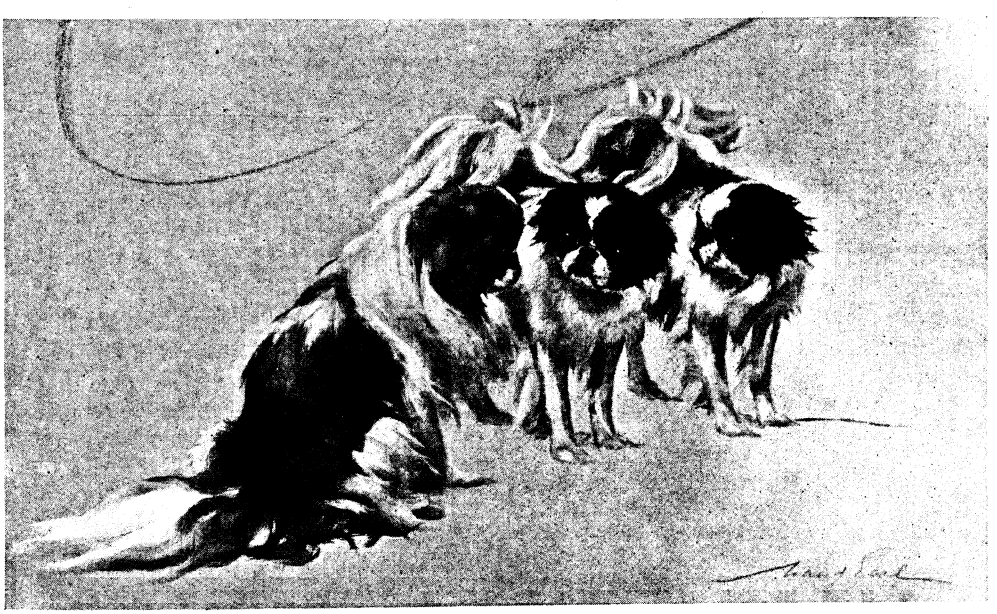


"THE PILLOW IS THE BEST COUNSELLOR." TOY SPANIELS "LITTLE TOM NODDY" AND CHAMPION "BURMA'S BEST."

Owners: Mrs. Graves and Mrs. Woodgate.

small eater, and a hard worker, the Bedlington justifies his popularity.

The Skye terrier is a pleasant companion and a good house-dog enough, but although he is said to have served many sporting purposes in times past, he leads a very sober and retired life by comparison to-day, and will not always attack a rat with any sign of satisfaction, although it is fair to add that he is quite capable of dealing with any rat that was ever born. If owners and breeders were not so keen on allowing long hair to grow right over his eyes, he would doubtless show some of the sporting talent that made his ancestors famous. But while he is regarded as a toy and a pet, perhaps it does not



"FINE FEATHERS." JAPANESE SPANIELS "TORA OF BRAYWICK," "DANCING GIRL OF MERROW," AND "SAN TOY OF MERROW."

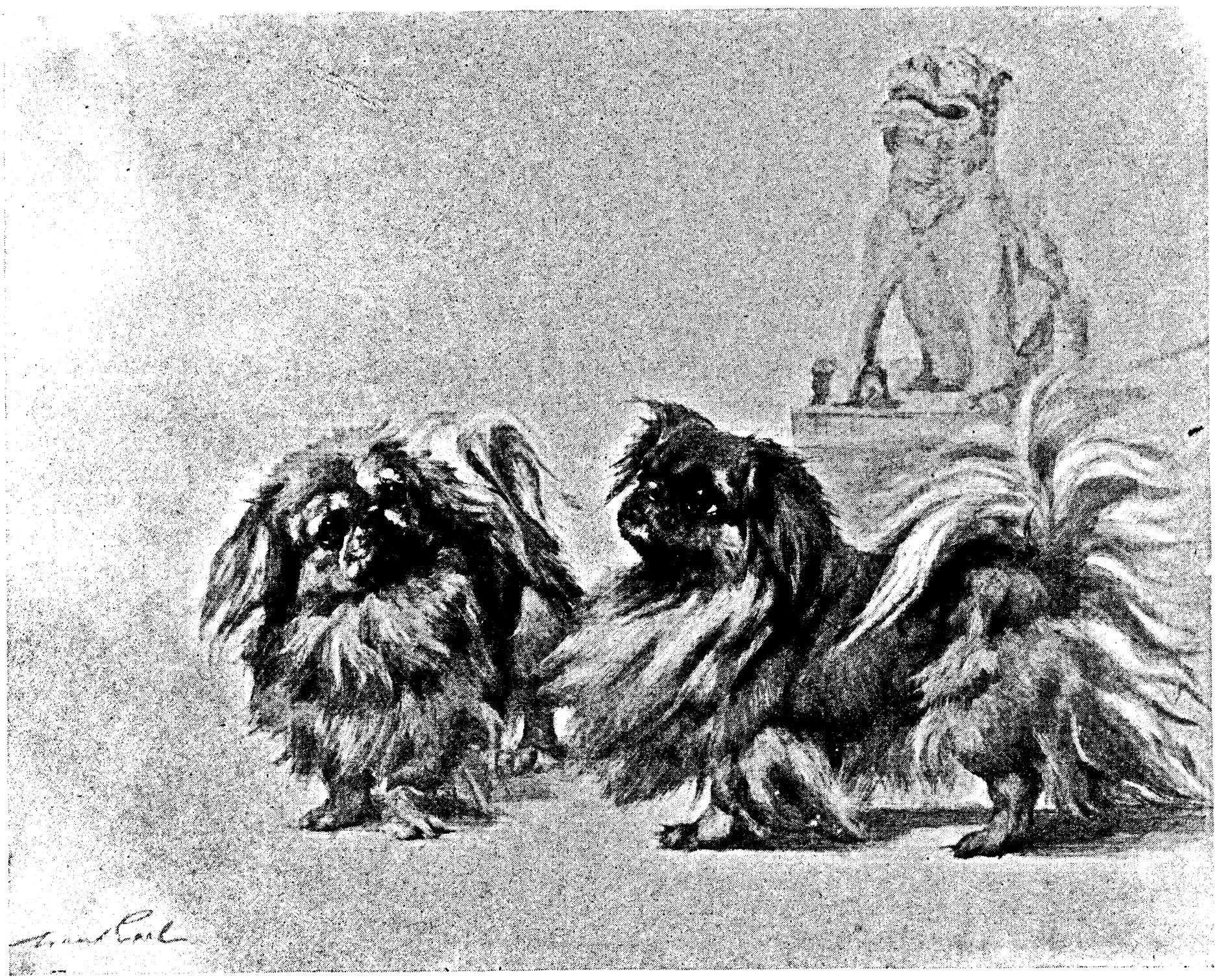
Owner: Mrs. Harold Gregson.

greatly matter to his owners that he should be very often quite useless.

The Welsh terrier is a comparatively new comer, although he has long been known in Wales. His interests are watched by a club founded in London twenty years ago, and he has become quite a smart and reliable little dog.

Long years ago, when there was no such thing as a dog club throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, the Dandie was thriving in the North of England and in the counties through which the River Tweed runs, and was relied upon to do a good bit of the vermin-hunting that falls to-day to the Scottish terrier. Sir Walter Scott, it will be remembered, introduced Dandie Dinmont into his novel "Guy Mannering," and by so doing drew special attention to the terriers that accompanied the old man. Perhaps his novel laid the foundation of the Dandie's popularity.

It will be seen from this very brief survey of the world's pet dogs that with few exceptions they are associated with a sporting past. For centuries the average Briton had no use for a dog that could not earn its living in some way, and it would seem that in the course of years the tendency has been to take the most attractive and smaller-sized sporting dogs, to alter their characteristics as far as possible by judicious selection, and to make pets of them. The response to this treatment has not always been successful. It may be said that some very good material has been spoilt in the re-making. But Fashion is a stern mistress and takes no thought of the difficult roads through which she calls her votaries.



"ANCIENT AND MODERN." PEKINESE "GOODWOOD LO" AND "GIA-GIA."

Owners: Mrs. Douglas-Murray and Mrs. Lilburn-MacEwen.

In these pages the characteristics of toy dogs have been set out with singular skill and fidelity by Miss Maud Earl, who shows that she is quite as much at home with the pets of drawing-room and boudoir as she is with the giants of the chase and the chosen companions of hedgerow, moor, and covert.

WHITE WALLS.

By MAX PEMBERTON.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—On her twenty-first birthday the Countess Ulusia, sole heiress of the lords of Rabka, becomes in her own right the richest woman in Austria, and is escorted home from a convent school near Vienna—where she has spent the past fifteen years of her life—by her uncle, a bishop, and Count Rudolph of Trieste, who has managed the vast salt-mines of her ancestral estates during her minority. Count Rudolph has made up his mind to marry the heiress, but she has already gathered vaguely that he has cruelly oppressed the downtrodden populace that toils in her vast, subterranean salt-mines, and she is determined not only to exact an account of his stewardship, but to judge for herself of its wisdom and its humanity. She receives a picturesque welcome from the rough masses in her strange kingdom in the underworld, but soon realises that oppression has brought about a state of ferment bordering on insurrection. The more violent of the rebellious spirits are for throwing off all authority, even if it entails the killing not only of Count Rudolph, but of the young mistress in whose name they are harshly ruled. But Jura the Wise, a young man of unknown parentage, but a born leader of men, is sent by the aged Anna, "the Witch," from the mines to the Castle, with this command: "If she be our enemy, kill her as the people wish; if she be a friend, save her and show her to the people." Reared entirely in the underground world of the mines, but reared in mental culture and refinement by a monk named Arthur, the young idealist is thrilled by the strange beauty of the new world into which he emerges; but mindful of his mission he presents himself at the Castle gates, where, in reply to the query of old Martin, the janitor, "You are from Vienna, sir?" he answers: "Nothing of the sort, old Martin. I come from your dead master, Philip, whom you called the Wise. Lift your lantern and look at me." The old man obeys, his hands trembling as he raises the lantern. What message is this? what fulfilment of the prophecy which has been uttered in the darkness of Rabka a score of years? "I know you, Excellency. I know you!" he cries. Thus Jura obtains a secret audience with the young Countess and tells her of her people's grievances. The police are visiting the people's houses to take their children from them. The old right of Parliament is being denied to them. There is a new scale of fine and punishment, and the people will not suffer it. "This is done in your name," cries Jura to the girl. "If it is not by your will, I will tell the people so." But before she can answer, the door opens and Count Rudolph, with Wasyl, the Chief of the Police of Rabka, enters. "There is the man," says the Count. "Arrest him!" Ulusia intervenes and insists that Jura shall be given safe escort from the Castle; but when daybreak finds him still outside the entrance to the mines, dreaming of his mission into this beautiful new world, he is arrested by Count Rudolph's police. The storm of insurrection breaks, but when the rioters besiege the tower in which their leader is imprisoned, Count Rudolph cries: "I cannot release the prisoner, for he is already free." Then a voice in the crowd cries: "Death to them!" and the Castle of Rabka itself is in flames before an hour has run. But Jura has escaped from his prison and rescues Ulusia from the fury of both fire and rioters, and when she opens her eyes from the long sleep of exhaustion she finds herself lying in one of the caves of the subterranean galleries of Rabka. Here she sojourns in safety, attended by the aged Anna, and here she learns how Jura was originally named Philip, after the lord Philip whom he strongly recalls in appearance. From Mathilde, a girl of the people, who loves Jura, the young Countess learns that Jura is thought to be the son of the dead lord Philip. The child died and was buried in the chapel of Rabka, but the child has come to life again and will be the master of the people. What, then, will be her own position if his right to reign in Rabka should ever be established? Even now the rebels acclaim him their natural leader. Justice must be done, but how? For the Count Rudolph long since banished the only man who held any proofs. Full of doubts, Ulusia leaves her refuge for Vienna, after stipulating that Jura shall follow her if she sends for him.

CHAPTER XVI.

BETRAYAL.

HE struck across the mountain and re-entered the cavern by an ancient shaft whose ladder of iron was rusted almost to the core and whose depths stood for one of Rabka's fables. But Jura the Wise had never known fear of the mine. No chamois had a surer touch upon niche or crevice nor went more boldly in the darkness.

He climbed down the ladder a hundred feet and, searching for an opening with his feet, touched an orifice in the face of the rock through which he crept to an ancient engine-room beyond—a sepulchre whose ghosts were mechanical and long become but oxides of their once proud iron. Hence his way lay still downwards upon a winding stairway, cut out from the sheer rock—at the foot of which he gained an outer cave, and was astonished that a lantern's glimmer spoke of habitation. This astonishment was not less when a voice addressed him from the shadows, and he discovered that the girl Mathilde waited for him, and that she had carried the lantern.

"Mathilde!" he cried. She did not answer him; and then again, "Mathilde, what do you here?" A sob was the rejoinder; she lay crouching on the ground at his feet, and he lifted her and raised the lantern that he might see her face.

"What is it, Mathilde—who has done you harm—has Mother Anna——?"

"No, no!" she cried passionately, "no harm has been done. It is for you, Jura—the soldiers are seeking for you—they are coming here—oh, for Heaven's sake, Jura!"

He knew not what to make of it. Her

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fear, her distress, but above these her passionate desire for his safety, were new emotions with which he had been unfamiliar hitherto. As in a flash this girl's love for him was revealed, and this set him trembling, he knew not why.

"What do you mean—there is no trooper in all Rabka who has the key to such a road as this—what do you mean, Mathilde?"

She clasped him about the neck and whispered her fevered words in his ear. It was as though she lived through years of her passion in that exquisite moment of his embrace. To lie in his arms, to look into his eyes—and yet to know! Oh, that were the heaven and the hell of a single instant!

"The Mother sent me to the house upon the lake for wine and bread—you know that it has been left there for us every day. I took my boat and rowed across, and the Herr Lieutenant Albert was there when I would have landed, but I made a good excuse to him and went away. Then I saw there were soldiers in Silver Creek, and I went up by the rocks and lay hid to listen. They know where we have gone, Jura—someone has betrayed us; they are coming here this night. That is what I heard—that is the news I bring, and oh, for Heaven's sake hearken—there is time, Jura—hear me and go back—I will follow you—I will be your servant if you will but go—away from this place, Jura, away from the soldiers!"

Her arms were locked about his neck, her bosom heaved, she pressed her lips up to his as though all sense of shame were long forgotten, and by this one supreme caress she would win him. The man on his part read the truth and, shaking himself free, he accused her.

"You are lying to me, Mathilde—it was you who betrayed us!"

"Jura, Jura! will you kill me with your words? I swear to you on the Holy Cross——"

"I will not hear you. Why do you come to me with this lie. It is you who have done this—there is not another in all Rabka who could have led them to this place. Think you that I am deceived, Mathilde? You shall never be the servant to my mother again—I will see to it."

Her face hardened, her tears were dried up at this.

"Oh," she said, "the drudge shall lie on the kitchen stones no longer—the crust shall be denied to her. Let the shame be to you and yours who have so treated me! All the mine knows what I have suffered. Are there not twenty houses open to me—but because of you, because you were her son——"

She fell upon her knees and burst into an agony of weeping. He knew nothing of the justice of her words, of woman's inhumanity to woman, or the story of her servitude. And this was to be forgiven him, for he understood that his hour had come, and that this night he must answer for what had been done at Rabka's Castle.

Should he save himself, or, throwing down the gauntlet, know the worst that could befall him? There would be a trial, he imagined, and the story of the revolt must be told to the judges. Understanding but little of the lawyers' jargon, or of any talk about incitement and persuasion, his untrained logic would have it that he could not be convicted because of what the people had done. Perhaps the prophet's wisdom helped him to decide. How strange that all this had befallen so soon after Ulusia had come to Rabka! To be sure, Rudolph had planned much of it, but not the final cataclysm. Did not the fables speak of an appointed hour "when another should reign where the lord Philip had ruled?" He thought upon this as he went down to the cavern. It could not be coincidence.

Mother Anna sat crouching by the fire as he entered and did not hear his approach. He touched her upon the shoulder, and she started up fearfully, as though the hand of justice had been laid upon her.

"Is it you, Jura? I feared the soldiers. There have been footsteps beyond the gallery this hour and more. Where is the girl Mathilde--have you seen her?"

He was about to say "Yes," when prudence restrained him. In truth that crouching figure he had left, the tears, the pitiful confession, remained a burning memory. Was it possible that this gentle old woman he had called mother had been mother to him alone? He feared that it might be so; he would not speak.

"What do you want with the child, Anna Mother?"

"Let her say where she has been this hour or more. Hark, Jura! Do you not hear them? I tell you the soldiers are in the gallery. Will you not heed me?"

She bent her head to listen, and he stood immobile, while from a distant gallery the sound of picks were to be heard. Here was a signal neither might disregard. The soldiers had discovered them—they were hewing their way to the cavern.

"What think you, mother—is it appointed that this should be, or would you have it otherwise? We can pass out by Three Torrents if you are of the mind."

"No, no," she rejoined—and yet it was plain that the doubt racked her—"the bridge has been down these six months. We cannot pass by there, Jura. What is to be done must be done by the mountains."

She passed talon-like fingers through her dishevelled hair, and peered deep into the heart of the fire. Perchance she sought a revelation of the mystery in the flames. All her life's work had been thrown to the scale in this hour. She had the wit to see that a vulgar tragedy might crown it, and that he whom she had called "son" might yet be hanged from the ruined ramparts of the Castle.

"You cannot go!" she cried, and then with a bitter oath: "The black death be upon her who has betrayed us! Shall I tell them that you are the lord Philip's son? What will it avail us? The proofs lie buried where the Monk sleeps. They will cry upon thee for a madman. No, no! I will not speak—but thou, Jura, must know. Twenty years ago you were sent to my keeping that Feodor might reign. The lord Philip lost his reason when your mother died; thereafter his brother would have killed you. But the Monk brought you here, and my duty is done. Tell them who you are, and let the world judge. I say that the hour has come and the day is at hand."

Jura did not move while she spoke. Some of these truths had been the hope of his years, but the whole truth he had never known. Even now he feared it; did not dare to give it a place in his mind, and was over ready to believe it a madwoman's mockery. The lord Philip's son—had they not promised him great destiny, a lord's dignity, the right and title to be Rabka's prince?

And all this upon the word of a monk who had been in his grave these three years. Oh, vain dream! What had it to do with him?

"I shall tell the soldiers nothing, mother," he exclaimed anon. "If the truth be as you say, my need is liberty. Think you that any trooper will trap me in Rabka? I will teach them a lesson, while you——"

"Go, go!" she cried, rising of a sudden and raising clenched fists above her head. "They are in the gallery—they are here!"

He turned to listen, and could hear the footsteps very distinctly now. The men were creeping up the steep which led from Rabka's river to the cavern—nay, were almost at the very door. The old woman herself, a very picture of a wanton sorceress, though as harmless as any milkmaid in Galicia, drew closer to the fire as though to warm her frozen fingers by its flames. Jura cast one quick glance at her, seized upon his rifle, and passed from the cavern by the way he had entered it. Let them follow him if they would. Some would pay for the venture to-morrow.

He re-entered the cave where he had first met the weeping Mathilde, and discovered her still crouching at its doorway. To his command that she should go down to Mother Anna, she answered by clinging to his arms and beseeching him to take her with him.

"I will go with you to the end of the world, Jura!" she said. "Leave me not here—for Heaven's sake take pity upon me!"

"Upon a woman who has betrayed me?"

"That I might win your love—yes, yes, that I might save you from the other woman. What is she to you, Jura? Will she not mock you to-morrow—will they not punish you because she owes her life to you? I sent the soldiers to the gallery; but I am not ashamed, Jura, and you shall thank me yet."

He answered not a word, but, thrusting her aside, passed up towards the shaft whose ladder should save him. The girl, clever as she was, might have omitted to speak of this. He dared to hope that it would be so, and climbing apace he reached the orifice at last and sprang out upon the mountain path. Oh, it was good to be here—good to breathe the cold night air! Good to see the distant light of town and railway, and to say that over yonder was the road which Ulusia had taken to her uncle's house! That road he had the desire to follow, but he had not taken twenty paces down towards the valley when he perceived a squadron of cavalry riding leisurely upwards, and, turning about, espied another crossing the hills from the south. The girl Mathilde had done her work too well. He knew now that but one haven remained open to him, and so perilous that no other in all Galicia would have dared it. He must climb the great pit known as the Bear's Mouth—must climb to that high ledge by which the mine might be regained and the hope of flight renewed. There was no alternative—that or trial, and, it might be, death.

Jura knew the Bear's Mouth because the Monk Arthur had often taken him there—

but from the mine, and not from the mountain. They visited it stealthily by night in the earlier years, and had studied the maps which showed where it lay and how it was to be gained from the mountain road.

"Some day," the Monk had said, "you may need any hiding-place that Rabka can open to you." And now the hour had come, and in that mighty hollow, amid the towering peaks, the saying should be put to the proof. Jura ran swiftly, believing that he had not been seen; but herein judgment failed him, for the soldiers were watching keenly, and they detected him upon the road even before he was aware of their presence. Putting their horses to the gallop, they descended the defile upon his heels, unslung their rifles as he began to climb, and were firing at him before he had gained the first of the ridges.

A man is not hit readily by a rifleman upon a moonlit night, nor is a rocky gorge a fair footing for a blundering marksman. None the less, Jura would not have lived five minutes but for a simple accident, which found the troopers firing with blank cartridge instead of ball. Oh, there had been outcry enough at this cursed mine, and the Government would have no new outrage upon their hands. So were the cavalry forbidden to load their carbines with ball, and so did the fugitive make the first of the ledges and lay there breathless, to listen to the dull reports of rifles and to believe that no miracle could save him from them. Something, perhaps, of the truth came to him when a second volley failed to dislodge a single stone from the crag he had climbed; but being willing, however it might be, to dare all in a supreme attempt, he started up anon and began the ascent anew.

And here jade Fortune turned her back upon him—for, losing his foothold when a third volley was fired, and the snow giving way suddenly at his touch, he rolled over and over to the defile below, and the troopers had laid iron hands upon him almost before he understood that the game was lost.

CHAPTER XVII.

ULUSIA HEARS OF THE ENGLISHMAN.

Count Rudolph was very well known to the servants at the Erlach Palace in Vienna, and his comings and goings provoked but little curiosity. Some ten weeks, however, had passed without a visit from him, when on the morning of the third day of May following the cataclysm at Rabka, he presented himself without warning and asked if the Countess were at home.

"She is not at home, Excellency, but we expect her every moment," said the tremendous functionary who ruled over the outer courtyard of that magnificent domain. "Will your Excellency be pleased to wait?"

The Count said that he would do so, and having received the homage of other splendid personages who lolled in angles, as though an erect attitude made life impossible, he ascended to the small drawing-room upon the first floor, and there awaited one whom ironically he named his mistress.

Now, this was a pretty room, and it gave upon the small Arenberg Park, which, as all the world knows, is one of Society's landmarks in the fair city of Vienna. But neither apartment nor park interested the amiable Rudolph at that moment, and his first swift glance was to the writing-table, where someone had been very busy lately, as all the evidence went to show. Here a careless pile of correspondence bore witness to a young girl's diligence. The Count examined these letters with scrupulous accuracy, and a pleasant smile illumining his not unhandsome face, he returned to the window and took up his station there.

Oh, yes, things were going very well indeed with Rudolph of Trieste, and he was by no means dissatisfied. True, his winter's tale had been a sad bungle, and the world had said unkind things about a man who began by exasperating his people, and then would have set the blame on a child's shoulders. Rudolph remembered how ironical the papers had been, and what troublesome questions had been asked in Parliament. But, after all, neither Press nor Parliament interfered overmuch with his comfort—and was he not master of Rabka now beyond any hope of dispute? How much per annum this would mean in good Austrian crowns, the wily Governor did not care to reckon. There would never be talk again of a woman's rule at Rabka—and that was sufficient for him.

He set his hat upon a little table, and his gloves he drew off carefully. One of the letters which Ulusia had written continued to trouble him, and this was addressed to an Englishman, the Earl of Amblehurst. Rudolph's spies—and there were a whole troop of them in the Erlach Palace—had made casual reference to the fellow, and named him among the favoured minority which was received tolerantly or even encouraged at the house. Rudolph knew



"The troopers had laid iron hands upon him."

sufficient of Englishmen not to like them; and while he did not care twopence whether this particular Englishman did or did not make love to Ulusia von Erlach, there were other eventualities he contemplated with less confidence.

"They are a pestilent nation," he said, "and never so happy as when they are managing other people's affairs. They do you good by fighting you and then leave you to get well upon their medicine. Now, who is this fellow and what is he after, if it is not Ulusia's money? I must see to it—I must have him watched."

He made a note of it in his mind, and would have added others but for the sudden entry of Ulusia, and her exclamation—which might have signified welcome or might have stood for annoyance. A sensitive person would have remained in doubt; but Rudolph of Trieste was far from being sensitive, and he cared very little how it might be.

She was radiant in a gown of black lace and chiffon, and wore a monstrous hat such as Paris was to copy presently—as Paris often does when Vienna sets the fashion. Become more womanly in her carriage and gesture—for her new position had made her that—Rudolph could admit that she was the most beautiful woman in the city, as report already had made her out to be. Upon her right arm she carried the smallest Pomeranian he remembered to have seen. Her left hand was free, and the wrist showed a wide band of gold emblazoned in diamonds.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with just a suggestion of annoyance in her tone, as she stood in the doorway and watched him; "they did not tell me you were here, Count."

"Not tell you? But I have been here for half an hour."

"They merely said: 'His Excellency.' I thought it would have been——"

She hesitated for the word, but he was at hand with it.

"The Lord Amblehurst, no doubt."

Ulusia raised her eyebrows, but did not contradict him. Crossing to the table, she made a pretence of sorting out her letters while she said: "Have you come here from Rabka, Count?"

"From nowhere else. I arrived at one o'clock and lunched at the Jockey Club. Then I drove in the Prater; but I did not see you."

"Because I was not driving there. Shall we have some tea? I am becoming quite English, you know."

The Count sat down in a low chair beside her and sucked the knob of his heavy cane, just as a bashful lad might have done. He was wondering why he had not married Ulusia von Erlach—though, in all truth, there were difficulties.

"To become English," he said, "it is only necessary to drink tea at five o'clock—for women. In men there is the 'box' and the bad language. I have neither accomplishment."

"But you are acquisitive, Count, is it not so? There is nothing you cannot do if you give your mind to it. I remember you told me so upon the way to Rabka. A woman should never forget a man's virtues—she hears so much of them."

He smiled sardonically. Certainly she was getting on—this little lady of the convent who had come to astonish Vienna with the magnitude of her fortune and the beauty of her face—an order in which the Count placed them naturally. By and by she would forget that salt was necessary to the human race; or, remembering it, would but add it to her soup—an addition which should never be necessary in a well-regulated household.

The servants entered at this moment with the tea and diverted the gossip to the worn channels of the *salon* and the theatre. Yes, she had heard Caruso, and did not know whether she preferred Melba or Tetrazzini, but was rather of opinion that the little Spanish girl who came from the *café* in the Prater had a better voice than either. Her ancient Baroness, the immortal Elwitza, had been very deaf since the fire—an infirmity which made of her a delightful companion. They lived laborious days and nights and held the palace against the siege of undesirables. Finally, she was not in love—for that was a question he never failed to ask her.

"When I see a row of men standing round at my parties, they seem to me like so many trees in a forest," she said; "all are shaken by the same wind of comedy or tragedy. Some lose their leaves sooner than others, but the bark wears. I dance as your Merry Widow dances, because I am glad to be alive and rich. Is not that a good reason, Count?"

"The best. But you have discovered riches, then?"

"To be sure, since by riches come accomplishments—to desire, to do, to learn and to discover."

"Discover? An odd word in such a connection."

She poured him out a cup of tea, laughing lightly.

"Discovery is the salt of life, dear Count. Was not that another of your good things? The power of knowledge, the wisdom which detects friends or enemies. Oh, I could write a book about it. But you would never read it. Have some fruit and do not look so wise. It frightens me."

He took a sugar-plum from a porcelain dish and toyed with it.

"Does your uncle send you all the news of Rabka?"

"Every word of it. You are rebuilding the Castle on a modern plan. The men have their parliament, and you can do nothing which that parliament does not approve. Where I am concerned you are asking the Courts to make you master of the mine and to go beyond my father's will. The Bishop is helping you because he is a foolish old man, who is frightened of what he calls my madness, but is much more afraid of your treachery——"

"Treachery, Countess——?"

"I think that I said so. But the Bishop is grown so old, and, of course, I am dependent on him for news of the mine."

"Why on him, when I am your servant always?"

"Then you shall tell me where he is mistaken. Remember how a woman delights in contradiction. Will you not give me that pleasure?"

He stirred his tea, at a loss what to say. This little devil with the wasp's tongue, surely she was Feodor's daughter, and had something of old iron-willed Philip in her nature also. Well, her day would soon be over. The Courts would see to that.

"Your uncle is a faithful chronicler," he said at last. "There is no trouble with the men now; though I would hesitate to say what might happen—in certain contingencies."

"Meaning my return?"

"I did not say so. Let us not pursue it. You have everything a woman can desire—the finest palace in Vienna after the Hoffburg; money so much that you might build your very carriages of gold; friends; youth. What is the mine to you while it continues to yield this harvest?"

"Are not its people my people. Have I no duty towards them?"

"To those who burned down your house because you wished to teach their children, and would burn it again to-morrow if you did not teach them. A happy proletariat, a model community. But I confess that there has been a change since the man Jura died——"

He bent forward and watched her face closely. She did not even colour.

"Let us see," she said slowly, "his death took place—how long ago was it?"

"Exactly twenty days. You know that he died in the madhouse of Pavna."

"Then all they said about him was true?"

"It was quite true. His mother was as mad as he. A queer family, Countess, and one of which we are well rid. Thank you, I will take another cup; your tea is really English."

She poured it out with a steady hand, but her eyes were upon his when she spoke again.

"Had I known this," she said quietly, "it would have saved my friend a journey to Rabka——"

"Your friend—— Ah, the Englishman! Well, we have behaved very well to your friend. Has he not seen everything—the church, the shops, the lake, the machinery? Did he not tell you so when he returned?"

"Oh, he has not returned yet; but I have heard from him."

The Count spilled his tea. There was no mistake at all about it—he spilled it honestly upon his exquisite clothes, and uttered an exclamation which it was well that Ulusia did not hear.

"You say he has not returned——?"

"Certainly—he will arrive this afternoon, from Strepitza, at six o'clock. I think he is to dine with us."

Oh, the cunning of it! Rudolph knew not whether she were laughing at him or merely telling a perplexing truth. He believed that the Englishman had left the mine ten days ago; but this journey to Strepitza, what was the meaning of it?

"Well," he continued presently, "you will be able to confirm, then, the news I bring you. We are a happy family at Rabka, and your friend, the assassin, has gone where his claims will not help him—unless it be that blood counts for something in the next world as well as in this. Permit me to say that you had a lucky escape; it was admirably contrived. All that the world knows is heroic. You were saved from the burning Castle and you managed to reach your uncle's house at Strepitza. We, however, who know that you were three days with this man—alone in one of the eastern galleries——"

She sprang to her feet. Perchance she would have struck him, but a splendid functionary, choosing by a lucky accident

that very moment, threw the door wide open and announced a visitor.

"The Lord Amblehurst," he said; and the young earl entered with a light step, as though believing that welcome awaited him.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEWS FROM PAVNA.

THE servant shut the folding doors and Ulusia was alone with her friend. Retaining her hand with quite unnecessary persistency, he asked her why she was upset and what had happened. And then she understood that she could not answer him.

"But who is the man? why does he come here?" Lord Amblehurst insisted. She withdrew her hand from his and bade him sit.

"He was my father's friend. He is the Governor of Rabka, and will remain so if the Courts decree it. Of course, he considers himself in some way my guardian; and he can be very rude. Is not that the privilege of guardians? Well, then, let us say no more about it. I have been so anxious to see you; I am so glad you have come. Is not that sufficient?"

He protested that it was all-sufficient and sat where she bade him. A fair-haired young Englishman, blessed with a fine physique and a rare fund of animal spirits, he added thereto an insignia of blood and breeding which was unmistakable. Count Rudolph had already pronounced him an aristocrat, and declared that nothing was to be got out of him. But he did not like him the less for that.

They sat upon either side of the little table, and for some while their talk was commonplace. Lord Amblehurst would have spoken of the mine, but her Excellency had more interesting themes.

"So you have come to me straight from my uncle's house?" she began. He contradicted that emphatically.

"Not so. I left the dear old gentleman three days ago. He is much troubled by the gout, and declares that if you do not marry after Easter, it will be the death of him. Now, really, you must try to save an old man's life at any cost."

She laughed, but would not look him in the face.

"Your letter told me that the man they call Jura is alive," she said. "Did my uncle know of that?"

"I think not. It is always difficult to say exactly how much is in the episcopal mind; but my discreet questions failed to earn a response. He was entirely ambiguous. It remained for Pavna to tell the secret."

"Pavna? But where is Pavna?"

"It is the madhouse upon the road to Mszana. Your friend is there, Countess."

She was quite silent for a long while, and he did not know what to make of her. It had been a pleasant thing to scour the mountains as her discreet ambassador who must bring her tidings of an old servant, badly treated by fortune; but that the news should afflict her in this way seemed to him beyond comprehension.

"Yes," he said, "the man was taken there by Count Rudolph's orders three days after you left Rabka. The doctors certified him as insane, and he is in safe keeping, I assure you. Indeed, but for a trick I would have come back to you empty-handed. But I was born a diplomatist, you know, and that's useful in its way."

"A trick," she said slowly. "But please tell me."

"The officials at the mine gave me an open letter—the Bishop helped me there—and then, you see, I did a little bit of forgery and I put the name of Pavna's governor on the envelope. Admittedly very wrong, but useful under the circumstances. I saw your man and talked to him. He is certainly mad, Countess—they are quite wise to keep him where he is."

"Why do you think that?"

"Oh, lots of things. For one, he believes that the mine belongs to him."

"And if it does—if he speaks the truth?"

The Englishman did not know what to say. Perhaps for an instant he could ask if this madness had not afflicted others; but he kept that thought close and would treat the whole suggestion jocosely.

"Why do you ask me these questions, Countess. Can I possibly answer them?"

"I will tell you," she said, looking him full in the face now, and caring nothing for the flaming cheeks which betrayed her. "Ours is a terrible story. My uncle, Count Philip, died a madman. They say that he went mad after his wife's death. His son is supposed to be buried at Rabka. But if he were not, if the stories are true and he was hidden in the mine by the Monk Arthur and the old woman Anna, then is he not the master? Oh, you can answer that as well as I; you can tell me what to do, for I am without friends, and I must—I must know the truth."

She rose and began to pace the room, as though rest were forbidden her until this great question had been answered. As for Lord Amblehurst, he remained the practical, common-sense Englishman, unmoved by her story and not a little incredulous.

"If that were so," he remarked quietly, "there would be a hundred proofs of it. To begin with, the Monk himself——"

"He is dead; he died three years ago in the monastery at Jajce. The woman can do nothing but affirm. No Court would hear her, I am sure of it. There remains the child's grave. My uncle tells me that these fables were known at Rabka ten years ago, and that he himself assisted at the exhumation. There is a child buried in the grave; he will swear to it."

"Then, surely, that's the end of it. These people are impostors; the man is mad. You would not risk your inheritance for an old woman's tale? How can you speak of justice in such a connection?"

"I must speak of it because I know—I know that Jura has told the truth. Oh, look at him and then at this. Is he not the lord Philip's son? Could anyone deny it?"

She crossed the room and took up a miniature. It was a portrait of the great Count in his uniform of hussars; but, had it been in a workman's blouse, then all Rabka would have known the face. Lord Amblehurst thought so, too.

"It's a marvellous likeness," he said; and then he hesitated and was afraid to speak.

"Did you not hear the questions Count Rudolph asked?"

"Well, he tried to pump me, certainly—a clumsy fellow—he will never make an ambassador. But I think he will not question me again."

"Oh," she said, "I could have hugged you for your answers"—and at this they both laughed together.

"It is never too late to do a good deed," said Lord Amblehurst slowly. "Now, if——"

"Tell me of Pavna," she rejoined, falling instantly to the serious mood which he liked so little. "How is he treated there? What do they do to him?"

Lord Amblehurst shifted uncomfortably in his seat.

"Is it not quite romantic——"

"I know—I know; but tell me all—tell me the truth?"

"Well, the place stands a hundred feet above the river, I suppose. Your friend is in one of the cells of what they call the White Rock. I think he wears chains. The Governor calls him a refractory prisoner, and says he has threatened to flog him; but I learned that he dare not do it, as flogging is against the law. A devil of a man, upon my word; he looked whips at me all the time, and said that, if Vienna interfered with him, he would fight half your Parliament or get justice. I made out that I had come from the Count, and then he melted. He had done his duty; if the Count wanted the man punished, let him apply to the proper quarters. He, the Governor, would have nothing to do with it. Why should he punish the insane? He believed your friend to be a raving maniac—he would not hear any suggestion to the contrary; and, upon my word, after I had seen him, I believed the same."

"He spoke of nothing else?"

"Feelingly he spoke of you and the appointed hour, and the summons, and Heaven knows what nonsense. The poor fellow thinks he has only to cry 'Open, Sesame!' to walk out of the asylum. I did not contradict him; I saw that he was quite mad."

"And all his chatter was meaningless?"

"Absolutely meaningless. You don't really think it otherwise?"

"Oh—if I knew! The man who could—or who would—tell us, is dead."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Sure! I am told so."

"Yes, but wouldn't it be well to ask? I'll do it for you, if you like; I've nothing else to do. And why shouldn't I go, if you ask me?"

"If you would," she said very earnestly.

"Of course I will. What's the good of having an uncle an ambassador if you can't wander round Austria at your will? I should like it of all things. The Monk may be dead, but someone will have his papers. That goes without saying. I'll see his Father Superior, or whatever you call him, and hear all about it. They'll chaff me at the Marlborough; but what matter? I could stand a lot of chaff for your sake."

He spoke half jestingly, but his eyes devoured her as she sat, and so earnest was his gaze that she flinched from it. These undemonstrative Englishmen, had not her friends warned her alike of their pertinacity and of their passion? True, she hardly understood him, and his jargon about the Marlborough was Greek to her. But she had his secret and feared to know that she had it.

"I should be eternally grateful to you," she said quietly; "you know that I am quite alone in this."

"But alone no longer—is that understood? If I return with this news, good or bad, you are alone no longer?"

He crossed the room towards her and took her hand.

"I am to find your cousin—if he be that—and finding him, you will give me the right henceforth to act for my wife."

"Your wife, Lord Amblehurst? Oh, no, no, you do not understand!"

His astonishment was undisguised.

"What do I not understand?"

She could not tell him.

"I do not know what I am saying!" she cried, turning from him despairingly. "Will you not go to Jajce, and let us hear the truth?"

He stood a long while debating it.

"Good Heavens!" he said to himself at last, "she is in love with this madman!"

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SUMMONS.

THE madhouse at Pavna lies high amid the hills which embosom the lake of Mszana, and for its far horizon commands the greater peaks of that bold range which runs to the north-east from Vienna and bends again to become the mild Carpathian mountains.

This is a beautiful country, and but little known to the tourist. Here Spring treads quickly upon the heels of Winter, devouring the snow as a sun-giant athirst, and coming to disclose a land of flowers where yesterday the ice had been all victorious.

Old Count Philip chose this scene, and here he built the lone white barrack in which the victims of Rabka and its solitudes are confined. A philanthropist of changing impulses, he knew full well the dangers of that employment by which his riches were won; and in establishing a refuge for those whom the subterranean world robbed of their reason, established also his own security.

It is a long, straggling building, guarded on the side of the mountains by giant walls, upon that of the lake by the sheer precipice, down which many a despairing wretch has cast himself headlong, and left not even a name behind him. The Governor—an old soldier always—is responsible nominally to the authorities at Vienna, but in effect to his chiefs at Rabka; and it is to be imagined with what concern such a man as Rudolph of Trieste would hear the pitiful stories the prisoners told, or mourn the maddened suicides whose loss the Governor deplored.

Here Jura the Wise had been confined nigh three months when the young Englishman forged a pass to visit him and heard his wild account of what had been and what should be at the appointed hour. A diplomatist by his own account, Lord Amblehurst was but a child in the hands of such an accomplished sycophant and liar as the Governor, Otto Zauner, and the fair account he carried to Vienna testified not a little to that rascal's shrewdness.

Had the Governor told the truth and nothing but the truth, it would have surprised nobody acquainted with the madhouse at Pavna and its system. There they had a short way with the obstinate or the notorious prisoner, and it rarely failed them. Let him be goaded to madness by any trick the warders could plot and plan, and then sent out to the ramparts to throw himself headlong in protest if he were fool enough to do so. No purple cord bestowed by an autocrat upon his vizier, no dose of hemlock drunk by a tortured Socrates, no vein opened at a Nero's bidding, could be swifter or surer than this sentence to the rock. The very lake, they said, was paved by the bones of Pavna's desperates who had hurled themselves headlong because Otto Zauner had willed it.

To the Governor's chagrin, this man they named Jura the Wise refused to take so desirable a course. All that could be done by way of subtle incentive had been done in the prison, but in vain. This fellow seemed to care nothing for the chains with which his limbs were loaded, the coarse food, the days of semi-starvation; even the secret and brutal blows inflicted by savage warders failed to quell his desire of life. When his chains were removed and he was sent out "for his health's sake" to the ramparts, the invitation to suicide remained unanswered. In vain the crafty warders would speak of the swift and painless death, of the delirium of that swift flight to the calm waters of the lake, of the years of drudgery and starvation to be spent in the darkness of the penitentiary. Jura heard them, but held his peace.

Otto Zauner was not the man to despair. Sooner or later, he said, the man would come to it. It is true that he had been alarmed by the visit which the Englishman, Lord Amblehurst, paid to the madhouse, and this alarm became something worse when he learned that the pass had been forged. Now



"'Will you not go to Jajce, and let us hear the truth?'"

it seemed to him that the poor wretch, who babbled of the great lord Philip and his heritage, must be silenced at any cost. His vindication might ruin all who had taken part in this conspiracy; certainly it would ruin Otto Zauner, the Governor of Pavna.

Day by day now the subtle scheme of torture was pursued. Removed from his cell in the White Tower, Jura found himself taking part in fearful scenes, very orgies of mad despair and revolting insanities. For three nights together they chained him to a madman whose animal frenzies surpassed those of the blackest fables of Rabka. He was herded with men who sprang at the doors of their cells like human tigers whenever a face appeared at the wicket by which the warders watched them. The most trifling breach of incomprehensible regulations meant starvation or the whip. He dwelt in a quarter of the prison where the lash fell incessantly. He saw men crucified in irons upon the wall while brute sergeants stripped the flesh from their very bones. He had even seen the branding-iron hissing upon white breasts and leaving a fœtid rose as its insignia. And still his courage did not flinch, his hope was unbroken.

Oh, she would know—she, at whose bidding he had abandoned the kingdom of darkness, she would save him! This new world, remote and terrible as it was, dazed and blinded him. He worshipped the sun-god no longer, was not awed by dawn or eve, had no eyes for the wonders of gorge or mountain, but only for the pictures which must remain unforgotten. Had she not been embosomed in his very arms when he carried her from Rabka to the mine? And the days succeeding the flight when she had been his prisoner, when every word she spoke remained a jewel of his hope—oh, she would remember, she would save him yet!

* * * * *

Now, this was the tenth day since Lord Amblehurst had visited the prison, and it is one long spoken of as a momentous day in the life of Jura the Wise.

Ten days had he been incarcerated in a dungeon beneath the White Tower when the summons came. Determined to drive him to the ramparts, they had fettered him at the ankles and put gyves upon his wrists. His bed was of straw, his cell but a filthy tunnel of the crypt—a rank, black hovel from which a dog would have turned. Here they starved and beat him, shutting him from light and sound and the footsteps of men. And here a jailor came to him on the tenth day.

"You are to go to the visitors' ward," the fellow said; "you are wanted there."

Jura leaped up from the straw, believing that the end was at hand, and this, surely, the day of his deliverance. Oh, she had sent for him according to the promise! Her power, her influence had made themselves felt; he would be tried for the crime, perchance, but assuredly acquitted. Visions of a new world to which he might be called flitted through his burning brain and drove him headlong. He would go out to men and to cities; he would find her as the oath compelled; he would begin to live again because she commanded it. Called by hope, he staggered after the warder, and put on his better dress as he was commanded. The way seemed paved with promise—he followed it with the footsteps of a little child.

They led him across an open courtyard into a little room with a sanded floor, and a high wall where hung a portrait of the Kaiser. It had just fallen dark, but a bald electric lamp in the dome above threw long shadows upon the bare stone and but half disclosed the pale face of the girl who waited for him. She, however, foreign to all restraints, and caring nothing for man or edict, cast down her bundle on the floor, and had caught him about the neck and kissed him before he so much as uttered her name.

"Mathilde, it is thou, then?"

"It is I, Jura—the Mother Anna has sent me. I come to tell you that all is well with her. Will you not kiss me, Jura? Will you not say that you are glad?"

He withdrew from her embrace, but did not release her hands.

"The Mother Anna sent you. Is it well with her, then?"

"She lives upon the island—the people would have it so; no harm has befallen her. Yesterday at noon I left, and am here to-day. Oh, the long, weary road—the long, weary road! And yet I would that I might walk it every day if it would bring me to thee, Jura."

He was touched by her distress, and leading her to the plain deal bench, he bade her sit and tell him all.

"Had you money to come to me?"

"The Little Mother gave it to me. I have three crowns still left. They are enough, Jura. If I must return——"

"Would you stop in this place, Mathilde?"

"With thee, Jura, was there need to ask me that?"

"Has my mother any message for me, Mathilde?"

She stooped and picked up her bundle. This odd baggage spoke of a woman's motherliness and of her belief that food and clothes are a man's first need.

"There are grapes from the Castle garden and brandy from old Martin's cellar. The money is what she thinks you will least have need of. The letter I am to give to no other, and to destroy if it should not come to your hands. It is here, Jura, for I have carried it where you alone have the right to find it."

She undid her dress at the throat, and he took the precious document. Then, it may be, he remembered the warder's presence, and turned covert eyes to the place where the man should have been standing. But they were alone in the room—old Otto Zauner, cunning fellow, had taken good care that they should be.

"Has Mother Anna received the letter that I wrote her, Mathilde?"

The girl's black eyes opened wide.

"She has received no letter save one that old Martin had from Vienna."

"Was that from the Countess?"

"I do not know, Jura. Mother Anna does not show such things to me, for I cannot read."

She spoke with a flush of shame, and he understood her distress. The letter which she carried was brief enough. He judged that Mother Anna had thought it wiser to spare words. She was well and waiting for his release. He would go to Vienna when they set him free, for such was the Countess's command. "This is for your ear alone, my son," the letter ran. "She is waiting for you at the Palace which all the city knows, and the money that I send is for the journey. Let the doors be open to your wit as it shall be wise. There is none who will harm Philip's son when the truth is known."

He folded the letter up and asked another question upon it.

"When did her Excellency write to my mother, Mathilde?"

"If it were her Excellency, the letter came three days ago, Jura."

"Then you will carry my letter to the Little Mother. You will say that I am doing what she wishes."

The girl bent her head. She had hoped for a different story. Oh, if he would but be the Jura of the old days! No harm had come to them then. But this madness, this revolt, this dream of the fables, had it not brought him a sorry portion?

"Jura," she exclaimed of a sudden, "I have seen the Governor Zauner and he has spoken to me. If we would leave Pavna and go to Russia, that would be the end of all your troubles. Will you not think of it, Jura? The Little Mother would send us money and we could begin life again—across the mountains, where they would forget you. I will follow you to the world's end if you will but trust me—oh, Jura, if you would but trust me!"

She clung very close to him, and her pleading became passionate. What a mad dream it had all been! to what a cruel goal it led them! And here was freedom, upon the Governor's word—life, liberty, love—if he would but hearken. He, however, repulsed her gently. He did not understand what the truth might mean to her.

"Her Excellency sends for me to go to Vienna," he said quietly. "That is a summons for which I have been waiting these many days. I must obey it, Mathilde. All that I have suffered is nothing, now that the letter has come. Do you think that I would have permitted them to have treated me as they have done if I had known of this? There is no prison in Galicia could hold me an hour if it were in my mind to go free. But I have waited for her Excellency, and now she has written."

It was torture to Mathilde, but she persisted.

"You are mad, Jura, mad to speak of such things. Do you think that you would be well received, you who are but a workman? They will laugh at you in Vienna—she sends for you to be a jest. I tell you now that there is safety across the frontier in Russia, where I will work for you and make you a home. Will you leave me for such madness as this—for a woman who will despise you because you go to her? No, no, I cannot believe it; you have lost your reason, you are a child and I must save you, Jura—because I love, oh, Heaven, because I must love you!"

Her emotion moved him, and he paced the narrow room in dire perplexity. How if this uneducated girl were a better prophet than any of them? Would laughter and scorn be his portion if he went to Vienna? A pride of his birthright forbade him to believe that. No, no, he was the lord Philip's son, and the truth would put armour upon him. He would go to Vienna and demand his rights in the lord Philip's name.

"The Little Mother should have told me the truth long ago," he said. "I came near

to it, but did not dare to believe it. I have lived upon it in this wretched place, it has been life to me. When I go to Vienna, it will be to demand my rights and to reward all who have been faithful to me. You will be among the number, Mathilde. I shall never forget what you have done for me. You will be the faithful Mathilde always. But I have my place in the world and I must fill it. Yes, I shall go to Vienna. I shall tell them—it is my duty."

CHAPTER XX.

A VOICE FROM THE HEIGHTS.

THEY gave him his liberty after Mathilde's visit and drove him out once more to the temptation of the ramparts. After all, Providence smiled upon Otto Zauner, and nothing could have been better than the Mother Anna's letter.

"The fool will risk his neck for this," said the wily Governor. "If he tries to go by the mountains, we shoot him; if he leaps, he will be drowned. Nothing could be better."

Which implies the truth that the purpose of the girl's errand was well known to Otto Zauner, and the letter discovered and read by his unresting spies.

This man was far from clever. Had he debated the matter closely, he would have known that Ulusia's friendship for his prisoner might be dangerous. In Vienna, the miner—for so he regarded Jura—could readily be made a hero, while he, Otto Zauner, would be but the black man of the story. This, however, was a possibility with which he would not reckon. Was not the Count Rudolph his friend, and did he not save his official neck and butter his official bread by that worthy's patronage? Certainly it were better to have this madman out of the road.

And so he sent Jura to the ramparts and bade the guard give him rope enough. Day by day at sunset the poor wretch kept his lonely vigil above the sleeping lake and remembered the stories of those who had chosen the arbitrament of its placid waters. If madman he were, his hallucinations would have afforded doubtful satisfaction to the man who tempted him, for he was not one who sought death, but life. Hourly now he searched the gaunt face of the cliff with discerning eyes, asking if he had the courage for that supreme ordeal which should win all or lose all in a dreadful instant. Ah, Heaven! the desire of it, because she called him, because she willed that he should go to her!

This deliberate survey of possibilities rewarded him but ill. He perceived that while the precipice was sheer at the summit, the foot of it shelved towards the lake and terminated in a pebbly rim of foreshore upon which a boat might be beached. By here and there, a few poor bushes thrust alpine roots into cleft and cranny; there was even a tree to bend sagging branches to the lake and invite his excited imagination to far-fetched hopes. But these soon passed. By them salvation might not be; nor could he hide from his eyes the picture of the broken body falling headlong from stage to stage into the black water which must entomb it.

Here was the impasse, and no logic could open it out. He must leap to the waters or remain Otto Zauner's prisoner to the end. Mere reason said that such a leap was death—but he would have nothing to do with mere reason. The fever of desire was upon him, and conning the path again, he discovered a promontory of the rock standing out above the shelving cliff and promising good foothold to him who had the courage to dare it.

Thus came a new thought. How if a man should so leap that his falling body were received, not by the rock, but by the kindly waters of Lake Mszana? To his mad imagination the thing seemed feasible, and the idea was one to occupy him many days, during which he avoided the promontory but remembered it.

If he had the courage! This he said to himself each day at dawn, depicting the leap and trying to believe that freedom could not otherwise be won. Upon the other side were the hosts of suggestion, the mocking laughter in his ears, and the whispering voices which named a fearful death upon the rocks, and the satisfaction of those who had driven him to the doom. Again and again he would approach the promontory and turn back from it in despair, until, indeed, it seemed that he had abandoned his purpose and must seek another. And this brought him to the ninth day—when, walking upon the ramparts as usual, he became aware that a voice was calling him from yonder mountain across the chasm, and calling him so insistently that he could hear no other sounds nor turn his eyes from the place whence the voice came.

Hallucination, the world has said; yet how many a world-famed deed had known a motive less plausible! This man had come out of the very bowels of the earth to the world of light and of the cities, and a woman had commanded him to come.

His whole life had been an exercise of the

imagination, bidding him shape this and that object of the books, imagine this scene, live the other.

And now he seemed to stand upon the brink of a vast abyss—upon the one side the kingdom of shadows and the living death; upon the other the unknown Eldorado at whose fountains of pleasure he might drink deep. From this imagined land the voice came to him, inviting him to dare all that he might live. He listened as one entranced: the prison behind him sank back into the mists of unreality; the eastern sky blazed as with the spreading lights of dawn; the mountains were golden pinnacles—the fabulous city took shape in their heart and opened her gates to him.

Gladly, as a man impelled by uncontrollable impulse, he vaulted the low wall which was the ramparts' defence and ran to the very brink of the promontory. A giant's strength, husbanded during the years, hurled him headlong above the lake. He heard a cry from the ramparts, fell to a delirium of the senses surpassing words, and then went down as a stone to the black waters. Sensation left him upon this—he struggled upward, believing that all was finished; discerned the sky and knew not whether it were sky or water; was sucked under again as his strength failed, and rose again, to roll half dead upon the strip of beach, and to say that this surely was the end.

He had leaped a hundred feet down to the waters of the Lake Mszana, and his giant strength had saved him. There is no like story in the records of the madhouse at Pavna, nor will any be told while the promontory bears Jura's name.

The poor fool had been there, but was there no longer. So said a warder who searched for him at sunset, peering down the chasm, and anticipating with grim satisfaction the Governor's verdict. Had you told him that the prisoner lived and was lying even then in a cleft of the rock below, he would have laughed in your face. Time enough when darkness set in to seek the broken body and bury it. Perchance the quest would be in vain—such had been known at Pavna, though the records made no mention of it. But the better story remained—the trap had been set, and the fool had entered it.

He went upon his errand gladly—that would have been an hour after Jura leaped, and just at the moment when strength had come back to him, and with strength all the desire of life and action which animated him from the beginning. Now was the freed man quick to perceive his chances and to grasp at them. A clever foot carried him from plateau to plateau of the shelving rock. Sometimes he would go standing, sometimes upon all fours as a brute thing upon a cliffside; but the horror of his fall drove him onwards as from a madness which might recur. Let his will be what it might, he could not still that drumming in his ears, nor obliterate that sensation of the leap which would react the dire moment and seem to send him hurtling down through the very rock he trod. With this he battled firmly, creeping foot by foot along the narrow path, and emerging at last upon the broad and kindly shore of the greater lake, where he might run up a fair road and dare for the first time to hope that freedom had been won.

The sun had set by this time, and the night fallen very dark. He espied a village by the waterside, but feared to enter it, and the detour carried him up the side of a low, green hill, whence he could see the distant lights of other villages, and far away upon a black horizon the lanterns of the railway to Cracow the capital. Of this he knew nothing, nor of its possibilities, and he walked on briskly, avoiding the homes of the men and the vicinity of hamlets. When fatigue, unutterable and unconquerable, at last overtook him, he lay down by the very brink of the water and slept for three good hours. It was after midnight when he awoke, and the moon shone out gloriously from a clear heaven of stars. He knew that he was hungry and athirst, and stumbled on, believing that, after all, Otto Zauner was the wiser man.

Ah, God, what a weary road to paradise and the gates! How remote he seemed from the living world, from men and from salvation! The stern, immutable hills frowned upon him, the golden water mocked him, the silence of the lone night frightened him. Many days of suffering had he known in his life, but never such an hour as this, when it seemed that a grave upon the hillside must engulf him, and all the dream surrender to the eternal darkness of the tomb.

For dawn he prayed as the blind for light. He counted the hours as the church clocks chimed them, and cursed their tardiness. For a crust of bread, he, Jura, whom men had named the Wise, would have bartered his life, his hope, and that hour of temptation and despair.

He laboured on, following the shores of

the lake until it bent inward again to become the bank of a great river running henceforth across a vast plain which the railway traversed. There were no villages here; nor did he espy any lights but those upon the distant railway.

A fiery dawn broke suddenly, heralded by none of those prismatic wonders of form and colour with which the mountains had made him familiar. A flat country revealed itself flatly. He perceived a river running brown as ochre through monstrous banks of mud; there were marshes on either side, and near to him, so near that its discovery brought him to a sudden halt, a ferryman's hut with a rude enclosure round about it. Whether to approach this and to cast himself upon the hospitality of the people—to do this or to flee from it, Jura knew not at first. But presently he said that if he fled, he would certainly perish of fatigue and hunger; and with this in his mind, he walked boldly to the door and beat upon it.

"Who are you? whence do you come?"

"I am a traveller from Rabka. I seek food and shelter. Open to me."

"What traveller comes with the sun upon such a road? Are you another from Pavna, then? I have had many of your kind. Get you gone before harm is done!"

A burly man appeared at the door, and thus was his talk. Jura had seen so many evil faces at Rabka that this face did not repel him, nor was he bent upon an argument.

"I have money and will repay. If you do not believe me, come and see. Is it anything to you whence I come? Open immediately and earn your reward."

The fellow undid the bolt warily and presently appeared, fresh from his bed and tousled. The uncouth figure at his door did not reassure him. He was about to slam it in Jura's face when an afterthought checked him.

"Show me your money?" he cried.

Jura thrust a nervous hand into the belt about his waist and produced a packet still wet and clammy. Very methodically and with a watchful eye he opened it and shook ten gold pieces into his hand.

"Give me food and drink," he said, "and set me on yonder bank, and I will pay you five crowns."

"It is a bargain, friend; you should have spoken this way before. Come in, I say. It's nothing to me whether you be from Cracow or Pavna. I'm but a ferryman, and know how to do my duty."

He opened the door wide and bade the traveller enter. As for the hut, its furniture was no better than a bed of straw and an old oak chest which the smoke of centuries had blackened. A fire burned in a narrow grate; there were bottles of wine upon a shelf by the chimney, and some coarse bread and cheese for their neighbours. The fellow soon set the food upon the table, while he bade his guest warm himself.

"Many come this way," he remarked meaningly. "The poor devils have little wherewith to pay me, I can tell you. But I am a queer chap, and I don't think overmuch about the money. You caught me in my bed, and that's no place to warm civility. Eat and drink, friend, for you look ill. You'll be safe enough here. 'Twould be a *fête*-day which brought the police to Borowitza."

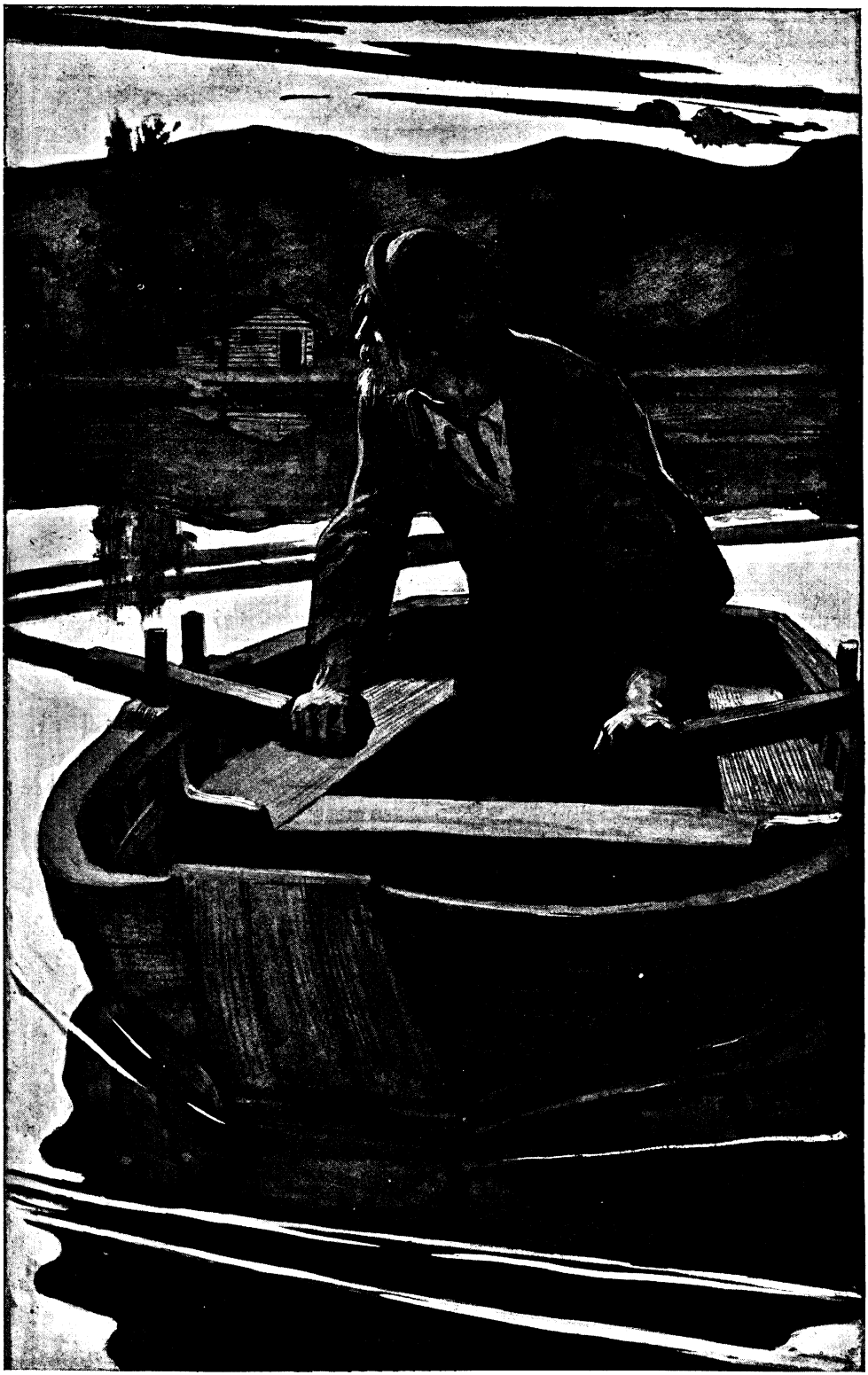
Jura made no reply for a little while. The long draughts of honest wine were as fire to his veins. He ate the coarse bread wolfishly and in hunks, while the ferryman watched him.

"Many's the good fellow I have sent to freedom in my day," he confessed, and then asked: "What's the odds? Who's the better because a poor devil is in the hands of the police? They pay me what they can, and get over to the station before Cracow. I say they are friends of mine, and no questions are asked. Do you rest here and dry yourself. You shall sleep in my bed; and when you are rested, we will set out. Oh, trust me to know an honest man when I see one. You can't deceive Boris, the ferryman, I can assure you."

Jura made no direct reply to this. His questions were about the railway—how far it was to the station, how long it would take him to get to Vienna? When he learned that he could be there on the following morning, if he caught the night mail from Borowitza, he was far from being reassured. The alarm would be all over the country by that time, and the police be out. Still, nothing could be gained by haste; and if this fellow would harbour him until dusk, he might yet have a chance.

"You say that the railway is two miles from yonder bank. Very well. You shall put me across at nightfall, and I will give you another gold piece. That's more than you could earn here in a year, is it not? Well, prove your fidelity, and when I get to Vienna, I will reward you richly. In this way our interests are mutual."

The fellow agreed, his tongue in his cheek



"He rowed swiftly to the opposite bank."

and his eye upon the leather girdle. Then he plied his guest with more of the wine he had so extolled with extravagant eulogy.

"There's stuff for the Kaiser," he said. "Do you drink it, and it will put new life into you. Afterwards you shall sleep while I watch. Oh, I'll have no mishaps under my roof, I can tell you. Let there be so much as a mule across the marsh, and my eyes name it, when others would not see it at all. You may sleep while you will here; there's no safer place in Galicia."

Jura said that he supposed so. He was so tired now that he could hardly walk to the mean bed which the fellow prepared for him; and whatever the peril of it might be, he knew that he must sleep. The next hour found him in a huddled mass upon the straw, so exhausted, so worn, that a stranger might have been hard put to it to say whether he were alive or dead.

He was alone in the hut when he awoke, and every vestige of the meagre hospitality had been removed from the table. Rich bands of light, bending from the west, spoke of afternoon and the hour of sunset. He rose hastily, his limbs stiff and aching, but his spirit unsubdued. A simple mind believed it possible that the good fellow who owned the hut had gone out to watch on his behalf, and determined to follow after. He left the place and went down towards the river. But not a sign could he see of any ferryman, nor was there a human being in sight upon any horizon. This gave him courage, and he began to say that there was no need to remain longer at the hut, and that he would find the road to the railway himself. Had he not been master of the boats at Rabka, and could not he master this crazy punt, about which the river splashed with so doleful a song? It was the work of an instant to cast it loose, and he had just done so, and was sitting there, oars in hand, when he remembered the simple truth that the owner of the boat must swim the river if he would regain possession of it. At which he stopped and laughed for the first time since he had left Pavna.

"I am growing a fool," he said. "This is no way to treat a kindness. The man has gone to the village and will return. An hour is nothing to me; I will wait until he comes."

He made the boat fast, and sat awhile by the water's edge, watching the twilight creep westward and the chrome fade from a darkening heaven. Anon, in the far distance he perceived figures against the sky-line, and watching them a long while, he named them for horsemen riding down to the river. This frightened him exceedingly, and he began to call aloud for the man who should row him over. That worthy, hidden by the bank of a dyke a hundred yards away, gave no sign nor betrayed himself by any movement. Minute by minute, however, the horsemen were drawing nearer, at such a speed that Jura could now distinguish their very habiliments, and tell himself that they were a police post from Rabka in pursuit of him. This alarmed him exceedingly, and believing that he had the right so to do, he cast the boat loose again and rowed swiftly to the opposite bank. Half an hour afterwards he struck a high road bordered by poplars, and following this for a mile or more, he came at last to the station, and imagined that the end of his troubles was at hand.

He entered the station with what assurance he could command, and, addressing the first official he met, declared his desire to travel to Vienna by the evening train.

"Very well, mein Herr, very well," was the response; "but have you taken your ticket?"

Jura stared at him with pitiful inquiry.

"I have money," he said almost passionately, for he believed that they were about to refuse him. "It is here, mein Herr."

He thrust his hand into his bosom again and would have drawn out the packet. The official watched him curiously; he understood what that silence meant; he could interpret that bitter cry of grief and astonishment.

"I have been robbed," Jura said, but with such dignity that even his questioner was touched. "I cannot go, mein Herr; I am sorry that I asked you."

The official made no reply, but turning away with a shrug, he went out to the platform at which the express must draw up.

Jura, however, sat long, watching the people with wistful eyes, and when at last the huge locomotive thundered into the station, he shuddered as a man who has lived his brief day of hope, but may not hope any longer.

(To be continued.)

THE UNFINISHED GAME.

By BARRY PAIN.

AT Tanslowe, which is on the Thames, I found just the place that I wanted. I had been born in the hotel business, brought up in it, and made my living at it for thirty years. For the last twenty I had been both proprietor and manager, and had worked uncommonly hard, for it is personal attention and plenty of it which makes a hotel pay. I might have retired altogether, for I was a bachelor with no claims on me and had made more money than enough; but that was not what I wanted. I wanted a nice, old-fashioned house, not too big, in a nice place with a longish slack season. I cared very little whether I made it pay or not. The Regency Hotel at Tanslowe was just the thing for me. It would give me a little to do and not too much. Tanslowe was a village, and though there were two or three public-houses, there was no other hotel in the place, nor was any competition likely to come along. I was particular about that, because my nature is such that competition always sets me fighting, and I cannot rest until the other shop goes down. I had reached a time of life when I did want to rest and did not want any more fighting. It was a free house, and I have always had a partiality for being my own master. It had just the class of trade that I liked—principally gentlefolk taking their pleasure in a holiday on the river. It was very cheap, and I like value for money. The house was comfortable, and had a beautiful garden sloping down to the river. I meant to put in some time in that garden—I have a taste that way.

The place was so cheap that I had my doubts. I wondered if it was flooded when the river rose, if it was dropping to pieces with dry-rot, if the drainage had been condemned, if they were going to start a lunatic asylum next door, or what it was. I went into all these points and a hundred more. I found one or two trifling drawbacks, and one expects them in any house; however good—especially when it is an old place like the Regency. I found nothing whatever to stop me from taking the place.

I bought the whole thing, furniture and all, lock, stock, and barrel, and moved in. I brought with me my own head-waiter and my man-cook, Englishmen both of them. I knew they would set the thing in the right key. The head-waiter, Silas Goodheart, was just over sixty, with grey hair and a wrinkled face. He was worth more to me than two younger men would have been. He was very precise and rather slow in his movements. He liked bright silver, clean table-linen, and polished glass. Artificial flowers in the vases on his tables would have given him a fit. He handled a decanter of old port as if he loved it—which, as a matter of fact, he did. His manner to visitors was a perfect mixture of dignity, respect, and friendliness. If a man did not quite know what he wanted for dinner, Silas had sympathetic and very useful suggestions. He took, I am sure, a real pleasure in seeing people enjoy their luncheon or dinner. Americans loved him, and tipped him out of all proportion. I let him have his own way, even when he gave the thing away.

"Is the coffee all right here?" a customer asked after a good dinner.

"I cannot recommend it," said Silas. "If I might suggest, sir, we have the Chartreuse of the old French shipping."

I overheard that, but I said nothing. The coffee was extract, for there was more work than profit in making it good. As it was, that customer went away pleased, and came back again and again, and brought his friends too. Silas was really the only permanent waiter. When we were busy, I got one or two foreigners from London temporarily. Silas soon educated them.

My cook, Timbs, was an honest chap, and understood English fare. He seemed hardly ever to eat, and never sat down to a meal; he lived principally on beer, drank enough of it to frighten you, and was apparently never the worse for it. And a butcher who tried to send him second-quality meat was certain of finding out his mistake.

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The only other man I brought with me was young Harry Bryden. He always called me uncle, but as a matter of fact he was no relation of mine. He was the son of an old friend. His parents died when he was seven years old and left him to me. It was about all they had to leave. At this time he was twenty-two, and was making himself useful. There was nothing which he was not willing to do, and he could do most things. He would mark at billiards, and played a good game himself. He had run the kitchen when the cook was away on his holiday. He had driven the station-omnibus when the driver was drunk one night. He understood book-keeping, and when I got a clerk who was a wrong 'un, he was on to him at once, and saved me money. It was my intention to make him take his proper place more when I got to the Regency; for he was to succeed me when I died. He was clever, and not bad-looking in a gipsy-faced kind of way. Nobody is perfect, and Harry was a cigarette-maniac. He began when he was a boy, and I didn't spare the stick when I caught him at it. But nothing I could say or do made any difference; at twenty-two he was old enough and big enough to have his own way, and his way was to smoke cigarettes eternally. He was a bundle of nerves, and got so jumpy sometimes that some people thought he drank, though he had never in his life tasted liquor. He inherited his nerves from his mother, but I dare say the cigarettes made them worse.

I took Harry down with me when I first thought of taking the place. He went over it with me and made a lot of useful suggestions. The old proprietor had died eighteen months before, and the widow had tried to run it for herself and made a mess of it. She had just sense enough to clear out before things got any worse. She was very anxious to go, and I thought that might have been the reason why the price was so low.

The billiard-room was an annexe to the house, with no rooms over it. We were told that it wasn't used once in a twelvemonth, but we took a look at it—we took a look at everything. The room had got a very neglected look about it. I sat down on the platform—tired with so much walking and standing—and Harry whipped the cover off the table. "This was the one they had in the Ark," he said.

There was not a straight cue in the rack, the balls were worn and untrue, the jigger was broken. Harry pointed to the board. "Look at that, uncle," he said. "Noah had made forty-eight; Ham was doing nicely at sixty-six; and then the Flood came and they never finished." From neatness and force of habit he moved over and turned the score back. "You'll have to spend some money here. My word, if they put the whole lot in at a florin, we're swindled."

As we came out Harry gave a shiver. "I wouldn't spend a night in there," he said, "not for a five-pound note."

His nerves always made me angry. "That's a very silly thing to say," I told him. "Who's going to ask you to sleep in a billiard-room?"

Then he got a bit more practical, and began to calculate how much I should have to spend to make a bright, up-to-date billiard-room of it. But I was still angry.

"You needn't waste your time on that," I said, "because the place will stop as it is. You heard what Mrs. Parker said—that it wasn't used once in a twelvemonth. I don't want to attract all the loafers in Tanslowe into my house. Their custom's worth nothing, and I'd sooner be without it. Time enough to put that room right if I find my staying visitors want it, and people who've been on the river all day are mostly too tired for a game after dinner."

Harry pointed out that it sometimes rained, and there was the winter to think about. He had always got plenty to say, and what he said now had sense in it. But I never go chopping and changing about, and I had made my mind up. So I told him he had got to learn how to manage the house, and not to waste half his time over the billiard-table. I had a good deal done to the rest of the house in the way of redecorating and improvements, but I never touched the annexe.

The next time I saw the room was the day after we moved in. I was alone, and I thought it certainly did look a dingy hole as compared with the rest of the house. Then my eye happened to fall on the board, and it still showed sixty-six—forty-eight, as it had done when I entered the room with Harry three months before. I altered the board myself this time. To me it was only a funny coincidence; another game had been played there and had stopped exactly at the same point. But I was glad Harry was not with me, for it was the kind of thing that would have made him jumpier than ever.

It was the summer-time, and we soon had something to do. I had been told that

motor-cars had cut into the river trade a good deal; so I laid myself out for the motorist. Tanslowe was just a nice distance for a run from town before lunch. It was all in the old-fashioned style, but there was plenty of choice and the stuff was good; and my wine-list was worth consideration. Prices were high, but people will pay when they are pleased with the way they are treated. Motorists who had been once came again and sent their friends. Saturday to Monday we had as much as ever we could do, and more than I had ever meant to do. But I am built like that—once I am in a shop, I have got to run it for all it's worth.

I had been there about a month, and it was about the height of our season, when one night, for no reason that I could make out, I couldn't get to sleep. I had turned in, tired enough, at half-past ten, leaving Harry to shut up and see the lights out, and at a quarter-past twelve I was still awake. I thought to myself that a pint of stout and a biscuit might be the cure for that. So I lit my candle and went down to the bar. The gas was out on the staircase and in the passages, and all was quiet. The door into the bar was locked, but I had thought to bring my pass-key with me. I had just drawn my tankard of stout when I heard a sound that made me put the tankard down and listen again.

The billiard-room door was just outside in the passage, and there could not be the least doubt that a game was going on. I could hear the click-click of the balls as plainly as possible. It surprised me a little, but it did not startle me. We had several staying in the house, and I supposed two of them had fancied a game. All the time that I was drinking the stout and munching my biscuit the game went on—click, click-click, click. Everybody has heard the sound hundreds of times standing outside the glass-panelled door of a billiard-room and waiting for the stroke before entering. No other sound is quite like it.

Suddenly the sound ceased. The game was over. I had nothing on but my pyjamas and a pair of slippers, and I thought I would get upstairs again before the players came out. I did not want to stand there shivering and listening to complaints about the table. I locked the bar, and took a glance at the billiard-room door as I was about to pass it. What I saw made me stop short.

The glass panels of the door were as black as my Sunday hat, except where they reflected the light of my candle. The room, then, was not lit up, and people do not play billiards in the dark. After a second or two I tried the handle. The door was locked. It was the only door to the room.

I said to myself: "I'll go on back to bed. It must have been my fancy, and there was nobody playing billiards at all."

I moved a step away, and then I said to myself again: "I know perfectly well that a game *was* being played. I'm only making excuses because I'm in a funk."

That settled it. Having driven myself to it, I moved pretty quickly. I shoved in my pass-key, opened the door, and said: "Anybody there?" in a moderately loud voice that sounded somehow like another man's. I am very much afraid that I should have jumped if there had come any answer to my challenge, but all was silent. I took a look round. The cover was on the table. An old screen was leaning against it; it had been put there to be out of the way. As I moved my candle, the shadows of things slithered across the floor and crept up the walls. I noticed that the windows were properly fastened, and then, as I held my candle high, the marking-board seemed to jump out of the darkness. The score recorded was sixty-six—forty-eight.

I shut the door, locked it again, and went up to my room. I did these things slowly and deliberately, but I was frightened and I was puzzled. One is not at one's best in the small hours.

The next morning I tackled Silas.

"Silas," I said, "what do you do when gentlemen ask for the billiard-room?"

"Well, sir," said Silas, "I put them off if I can. Mr. Harry directed me to, the place being so much out of order."

"Quite so," I said. "And when you can't put them off?"

"Then they just try it, sir, and the table puts them off. It's very bad. There's been no game played there since we came."

"Curious," I said. "I thought I heard a game going on last night."

"I've heard it myself, sir, several times. There being no light in the room, I've put it down to a loose ventilator. The wind moves it and it clicks."

"That'll be it," I said. Five minutes later I had made sure that there was no loose ventilator in the billiard-room. Besides, the sound of one ball striking another is not quite like any other sound. I also went up to the board and turned the score back, which I had omitted to do the night before. Just then Harry passed the door on his way

from the bar, with a cigarette in his mouth as usual. I called him in.

"Harry," I said, "give me thirty, and I'll play you a hundred up for a sovereign. You can tell one of the girls to fetch our cues from upstairs."

Harry took his cigarette out of his mouth and whistled. "What, uncle!" he said. "Well, you're going it, I don't think. What would you have said to me if I'd asked you for a game at ten in the morning?"

"Ah!" I said, "but this is all in the way of business. I can't see much wrong with the table, and if I can play on it, then other people may. There's a chance to make a sovereign for you, anyhow. You've given me forty-five and a beating before now."

"No, uncle," he said, "I wouldn't give you thirty. I wouldn't give you one. The table's not playable. Luck would win against Roberts on it."

He showed me the faults of the thing and said he was busy. So I told him if he liked to lose the chance of making a sovereign, he could.

"I hate that room," he said, as we came out. "It's not too clean, and its smells like a vault."

"It smells a lot better than your cigarettes," I said.

For the next six weeks we were all busy, and I gave little thought to the billiard-room. Once or twice I heard old Silas telling a customer that he could not recommend the table, and that the whole room was to be redecorated and refitted as soon as we got the estimates. "You see, sir, we've only been here a little while, and there hasn't been time to get everything as we should like it quite yet."

One day, Mrs. Parker, the woman who had the Regency before me, came down from town to see how we were getting on. I showed the old lady round, pointed out my improvements, and gave her a bit of lunch in my office.

"Well, now," I said, as she sipped her glass of port afterwards, "I'm not complaining of my bargain, but isn't the billiard-room a bit queer?"

"It surprises me," she said, "that you've left it as it is. Especially with everything else going ahead, and the yard half full of motors. I should have taken it all down myself if I'd stopped. That iron roof's nothing but an eyesore, and you might have a couple of beds of geraniums there and improve the look of your front."

"Let's see," I said. "What was the story about that billiard-room?"

"What story do you mean?" she said, looking at me suspiciously.

"The same one you're thinking of," I said.

"About that man, Josiah Ham?"

"That's it."

"Well, I shouldn't worry about that, if I were you. That was all thirty years ago, and I doubt if there's a soul in Tanslowe knows it now. Best forgotten, I say. Talk of that kind doesn't do a hotel any good. Why, how did you come to hear of it?"

"That's just it," I said. "The man who told me was none too clear. He gave me a hint of it. He was an old commercial passing through, and had known the place in the old days. Let's hear your story, and see if it agrees with his."

But I had told my fibs to no purpose. The old lady seemed a bit flustered. "If you don't mind, Mr. Sanderson, I'd rather not speak of it."

I thought I knew what was troubling her. I filled her glass and my own. "Look here," I said. "When you sold the place to me, it was a fair deal. You weren't called upon to go thirty years back, and no reasonable man would expect it. I'm satisfied. Here I am, and here I mean to stop, and twenty billiard-rooms wouldn't drive me away. I'm not complaining. But just as a matter of curiosity, I'd like to hear your story."

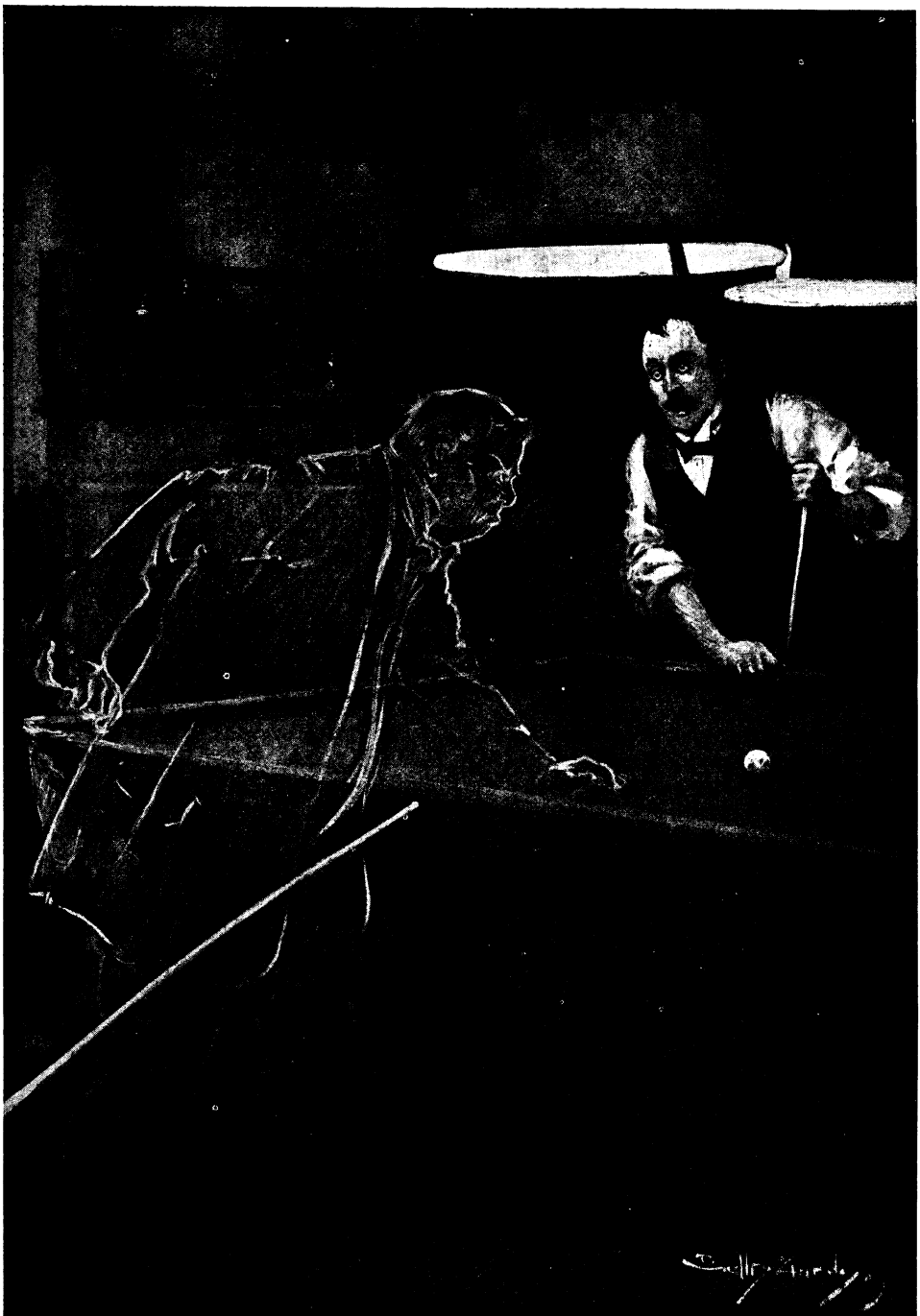
"What's your trouble with the room?"

"Nothing to signify. But there's a game played there and marked there—and I can't find the players, and it's never finished. It stops always at sixty-six—forty-eight."

She gave a glance over her shoulder. "Pull the place down," she said. "You can afford to do it, and I couldn't." She finished her port. "I must be going, Mr. Sanderson. There's rain coming on, and I don't want to sit in the train in my wet things. I thought I would just run down to see how you were getting on, and I'm sure I'm glad to see the old place looking up again."

I tried again to get the story out of her, but she ran away from it. She had not got the time, and it was better not to speak of such things. I did not worry her about it much, as she seemed upset over it.

I saw her across to the station, and just got back in time. The rain came down in torrents. I stood there and watched it, and thought it would do my garden a bit of good. I heard a step behind me and looked round.



"The fat man was gone—gone, as I looked at him, like a flame blown out, vanished into nothing."

A fat chap with a surly face stood there, as if he had just come out of the coffee-room. He was the sort that might be a gentleman and might not.

"Afternoon, sir," I said. "Nasty weather for motoring."

"It is," he said. "Not that I came in a motor. You the proprietor, Mr. Sanderson?"

"I am," I said. "Came here recently."

"I wonder if there's any chance of a game of billiards."

"I'm afraid not," I said. "Table's shocking. I'm having it all done up afresh, and then——"

"What's it matter?" said he. "I don't care. It's something to do, and one can't go out."

"Well," I said, "if that's the case, I'll give you a game, sir. But I'm no flyer at it at the best of times, and I'm all out of practice now."

"I'm no good, myself. No good at all. And I'd be glad of the game."

At the billiard-room door I told him I'd fetch a couple of decent cues. He nodded and went in.

When I came back with my cue and Harry's, I found the gas lit and the blinds drawn, and he was already knocking the balls about.

"You've been quick, sir," I said, and offered him Harry's cue. But he refused and said he would keep the one he had taken from the rack. Harry would have sworn if he had found that I had lent his cue to a stranger, so I thought that was just as well. Still, it seemed to me that a man who took a twisted cue by preference was not likely to be an expert.

The table was bad, but not so bad as Harry had made out. The luck was all my side. I was fairly ashamed of the flukes I made, one after the other. He said nothing, but gave a short, loud laugh once or twice—it was a nasty-sounding laugh. I was at thirty-seven when he was nine, and I put on eleven more at my next visit and thought I had left him nothing.

Then the fat man woke up. He got out of his first difficulty, and after that the balls ran right for him. He was a player, too, with plenty of variety and resource, and I could see that I was going to take a licking. When he had reached fifty-one, an unlucky kiss left him an impossible position. But I miscued, and he got going again. He played very, very carefully now, taking a lot more time for consideration than he had done in his previous break. He seemed to have got excited over it, and breathed hard, as fat men do when they are worked up. He had kept his coat on, and his face shone with perspiration.

At sixty-six he was in trouble again; he walked round to see the exact position, and chalked his cue. I watched him rather eagerly, for I did not like the score. I hoped he would go on.

His cue slid back to strike, and then dropped with a clatter from his hand. The fat man was gone—gone, as I looked at him, like a flame blown out, vanished into nothing.

I staggered away from the table. I began to back slowly towards the door, meaning to make a bolt for it. There was a click from the scoring-board, and I saw the thing marked up. And then—I am thankful to say—the billiard-room door opened, and I saw Harry standing there. He was very white and shaky. Somehow, the fact that he was frightened helped to steady me.

"Good Heavens, uncle!" he gasped. "I've been standing outside. What's the matter? What's happened?"

"Nothing's the matter," I said sharply. "What are you shivering about?" I swished backed the curtain, and sent up the blind with a snap. The rain was over now, and the sun shone in through the wet glass—I was glad of it.

"I thought I heard voices—laughing—somebody called the score."

I turned out the gas. "Well," I said, "this table's enough to make any man laugh, when it don't make him swear. I've been trying your game of one hand against another, and I dare say I called the score out loud. It's no catch—not even for a wet afternoon. I'm not both-handed, like the apes and Harry Bryden."

Harry is as good with the left hand as the right, and a bit proud of it. I slid my own cue back into its case. Then whistling a bit of a tune, I picked up the stranger's cue, which I did not like to touch. I nearly dropped it again when I saw the initials "J. H." on the butt. "Been trying the cues," I said, as I put it in the rack.

He looked at me as if he were going to ask more questions. So I put him on to something else. "We've not got enough cover for those motor-cars," I said. "Lucky we hadn't got many here in this rain. There's plenty of room for another shed, and it needn't cost much. Go and see what you can make of it. I'll come out directly, but I've got to talk to that girl in the bar first."

He went off, looking rather ashamed of his tremors.

I had not really very much to say to Miss Hesketh in the bar. I put three fingers of whisky in a glass and told her to put a dash of soda on the top of it. That was all. It was a full-sized drink and did me good.

Then I found Harry in the yard. He was figuring with pencil on the back of an envelope. He was always pretty smart where there was anything practical to deal with. He had spotted where the shed was to go, and he was finding what it would cost at a rough estimate.

"Well," I said, "if I went on with that idea of mine about the flower-beds, it needn't cost much beyond the labour."

"What idea?"

"You've got a head like a sieve. Why, carrying on the flower-beds round the front where the billiard-room now stands. If we pulled that down, it would give us all the materials we want for the new motor-shed. The roofing's sound enough, for I was up yesterday looking into it."

"Well, I don't think you mentioned it to me, but it's a rare good idea."

"I'll think about it," I said.

That evening, my cook, Timbs, told me he'd be sorry to leave me, but he was afraid he'd find the place too slow for him—not enough doing. Then old Silas informed me that he hadn't meant to retire so early, but he wasn't sure—the place was livelier than he had expected, and there would be more work than he could get through.

I asked no questions. I knew the billiard-room was somehow or other at the bottom of it, and so it turned out. In three days' time the workmen were in the house and bricking up the billiard-room door; and after that Timbs and old Silas found the Regency suited them very well, after all. And it was not just to oblige Harry, or Timbs, or Silas, that I had the alteration made. That unfinished game was in my mind; I had played it, and wanted never to play it again. It was of no use for me to tell myself that it had all been a delusion, for I knew better. My health was good, and I had no delusions. I had played it with Josiah Ham—with the lost soul of Josiah Ham—and that thought filled me not with fear, but with a feeling of sickness and disgust.

It was two years later that I heard the story of Josiah Ham, and it was not from old Mrs. Parker. An old tramp came into the saloon bar begging, and Miss Hesketh was giving him the rough side of her tongue.

"Nice treatment!" said the old chap. "Thirty years ago I worked here, and made good money, and was respected, and now it's insults."

And then I struck in. "What did you do here?" I asked.

"Waited at table and marked at billiards."

"Till you took to drink?" I said.

"Till I resigned from a strange circumstance."

I sent him out of the bar, and took him down the garden, saying I'd find him an hour or two's work. "Now, then," I said, as soon as I had got him alone, "what made you leave?"

He looked at me curiously. "I expect you know, sir," he said. "Sixty-six. Unfinished."

And then he told me of a game played in that old billiard-room on a wet summer afternoon thirty years before. He, the marker, was one of the players. The other man was a commercial traveller, who used the house pretty regularly. "A fat man, ugly-looking, with a nasty laugh. Josiah Ham, his name was. He was at sixty-six when he got himself into a tight place. He moved his ball—did it when he thought I wasn't looking. But I saw it in the glass, and I told him of it. He got very angry. He said he wished he might be struck dead if he ever touched the ball."

The old tramp stopped. "I see," I said.

"They said it was apoplexy. It's known to be dangerous for fat men to get very angry. But I'd had enough of it before long. I cleared out, and so did the rest of the servants."

"Well," I said, "we're not so superstitious nowadays. And what brought you down in the world?"

"It would have driven any man to it," he said. "And once the habit is formed—well, it's there."

"If you keep off it, I can give you a job weeding for three days."

He did not want the work. He wanted a shilling, and he got it; and I saw to it that he did not spend it in my house.

We have got a very nice billiard-room upstairs now. Two new tables and everything ship-shape. You may find Harry there most evenings. It is all right. But I have never taken to billiards again myself.

And where the old billiard-room was, there are flower-beds. The pansies that grow there have got funny markings—like figures.

THE INLAND NAVIGATION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY WILLIAM RALPH BALDWIN-WISEMAN.

II.—CONSTRUCTIVE FEATURES.

IN a tract of country possessed of considerable inequalities of level, a railway is much more readily constructed and operated than a canal. On the former, considerable alternations of level can be overcome by carefully disposed grades or inclines, but no such method of construction can be adopted for the latter, and level lengths of water-channel have to be laid out at convenient altitudes, each change of level being overcome by the installation of a lock, or series of locks, a hydraulic lift or an inclined plane of steeper grade and shorter length than a railway gradient, on a site conveniently situated between the two levels.

In this connection it is somewhat interesting to compare the three following well-known railway gradients with the lockage on the various canals referred to in this article and particularly with the *data* given in Table II. On the Caledonian Railway there is a rise from Carlisle to the Beattock summit of 948 feet in a distance of about fifty miles, succeeded by a descent of 972 feet to Glasgow in a further distance of fifty-two miles, the steepest grade of considerable length being a rise of 1 in 80 for a distance of ten miles. The London and North-Western Railway track crosses Shap on an incline of 1 in 75 for a distance of four miles and the Lickey incline, on the Midland Railway, has a rise of 1 in 37 for a distance of two miles.

In order to reduce the provision of these contrivances for changes of level to a minimum, wide detours are not infrequently made, in order to follow a particular line of constant level in a valley, or to lead the canal over the lowest point of the divide separating two contiguous valleys. On the Thames and Severn Canal, the distance from Inglesham, where the canal joins the River Thames, to Siddington, near Cirencester, is 13·5 miles, an increase of 25 per cent. on the crow-fly distance despite that there are 16 locks on the section. Similarly the crow-fly distance from Semington bottom lock to Bath bottom lock on the Kennet and Avon Canal is 9·4 miles, whilst the length of this canal section, on which there are nine locks, is 14·7 miles, an increase of over 56 per cent. on the crow-fly distance.

The provision or elimination of a lock, or of a series of locks, is not merely a question of capital cost, but also one of maintenance, since it materially affects the cost of operation and repair of the canal, as well as the speed of transit of the traffic on the canal.

For every vessel passing through a lock, or a series of locks, some water is withdrawn from the upper level and eventually passed to the lower level, the amount of water so wasted varying with the width and lift of the lock and with the direction of the passing vessel, for a descending boat uses a lockful of water, less the amount of its displacement, whilst an ascending boat uses a lockful, increased by the amount of its displacement; the volume of the vessel's displacement being, of course, greater when it is loaded than when it is light. This draught of water from the summit level must be made good by the provision of a supply from a storage reservoir, at or above the summit level, or else an adequate pumping plant must be installed, as at Cowroast, on the Grand Junction Canal, to pump to the higher levels the quantity which has escaped therefrom by leakage and lockage, and also to replenish the loss by evaporation over the length of the navigation.

The speed of transit of a vessel is more or less dependent on: (1) the comparative freedom of the canal from sharp curves; (2) the ratio of the cross-section of the canal to the immersed section of the boat, the best minimum ratio being 6 to 1; and (3) the ratio of the draught of the boat to the depth of the canal; a fairly common and economical speed being from two and a half miles to three and a half miles an hour, although on some of the larger canals the speed is somewhat higher. But for each lock there will be loss of time, not only in locking, but also in approaching and leaving the lock, in addition to which there is, not infrequently, the time lost in waiting turns.

Canal.	From	To	No. of Locks.	In a distance of miles.	Average distance between Locks, in miles.
Bolton	Salford	Prestolee	17	8·0	0·47
Calder and Hebble	Fall Ing, Wakefield	Salterhebble	35	19·5	0·56
" " "	Salterhebble	Halifax	14	1·7	0·12
Chesterfield	Belk Lane	Norwood	14	1·2	0·09
"	Thorpe	W. Stockwith	46	29·4	0·64
Dearne and Dove	Swinton	Barnsley	19	9·1	0·48
Droitwich	Droitwich	Hawford	8	5·7	0·71
Ellesmere	Hurleston	Grindley Brook	19	12·1	0·64
Glamorganshire	Merthyr Tydvil	Cardiff	52	25·5	0·49
Gloucester and Birmingham	Tardebigge	Diglis	58	15·5	0·27
" " "	At	Tardebigge	30	2·9	0·10
Grand Junction	Cowroast, Tring	Brentford	57	35·5	0·62
" "	Fenny Stratford	Bulbourne	24	16·5	0·69
Huddersfield Narrow	Huddersfield	Marsden	42	7·2	0·17
" "	Diggle	Ashton-under-Lyne	32	8·5	0·27
Kennet and Avon	Newbury	Crofton	31	16 6	0·54
" " "	Wootton Rivers	Hanham	54	49·4	0·91
" " "	At	Devizes	29	2·5	0·09
Leeds and Liverpool	Leeds	Greenberfield	44	40·7	0·92
" " "	At	Johnson's Hillock	7	0·5	0·07
" " "	At	Wigan	24	2·2	0·09
Macclesfield	At	Bosley	12	1·1	0·09
Monmouthshire	Pontnewydd	Malpas	31	5·2	0·17
"	Alteryn	Newbridge	32	9·0	0·28
Neath	Glyn Neath	Neath	19	8·9	0·47
Nutbrook	Back Saddle	Shipley	13	4·1	0·32
Rochdale	Sowerby Bridge	Warland	36	13·0	0·36
"	West Summit	Manchester	56	19·2	0·34
Stafford and Worcester	Stourport	Compton	31	23·2	0·75
" " "	Gailey	Tixall	12	11·4	0·95
Stratford-on-Avon	King's Norton	Stratford-on-Avon	55	25·4	0·46
Swansea	Henhoydd	Swansea	36	16·2	0·45
Warwick and Birmingham	Knowle	Hatton	27	10·4	0·38
" " "	At	Hatton	21	1·9	0·09
" " "	At	Bordesley	6	0·5	0.08
" " Napton	Radford	Calcutt	23	8·1	0·35

I. NUMBER OF LOCKS RISING OR FALLING IN ONE DIRECTION, WITH DISTANCES.

In the case of a steam-tug towing several barges there is a considerable loss of time in breaking up the tow on one side of the lock, passing the several boats into the locks, singly or in pairs, and assembling them on the other side, whilst, not infrequently, the tug is of little or no use during the whole operation of locking and each boat has to be hauled into and out of the lock by men or horses. Also, occasionally, the necessary reconstruction or repair of a lock, or an accident to one, will interfere with the traffic on the whole section upon which it is situated. The cost of maintenance of a locked length of canal is much greater than that of an unlocked length, not only because of the wear and tear of movable parts in frequent operation, but also because of the increased wear due to the occasional collision of boats with the gates of the locks.

As a rough estimate, from fifteen to twenty minutes are occupied in the passage of a boat through each lock, so that, assuming an average speed of three miles an hour upon the level reaches, the installation of a single lock is equivalent to an extension of the route, by a distance varying from three-quarters of a mile to a mile. One can, therefore, readily appreciate how seriously these variations of surface level reduce the speed of transit when one studies Table I., or recalls that, over the whole English canal system, there is on an average one lock for every 1·6 miles of canal; or when, considering specific routes, one finds on the Kennet and Avon route between the Rivers Thames and Severn no less than 106 locks between Reading and Hanham, the rise from the former place to the summit level—upon which is the Crofton Tunnel, 474 feet above sea-level—requiring fifty-two locks, whilst on the Hanham side a descent through 235 feet in twenty-nine locks.

Route *via*	No. of separate Water-ways.	Summit Level in feet above O.D. to nearest 10 feet.	Length in miles of Route.			No. of Locks.	Average distance between Locks, in miles.	Average Lift in feet of each Lock.
			Canal.	River.	Total.			
Leeds and Liverpool Canal	4	480	161	26	187	104	1·80	9·2
Rochdale Canal	8	590	127	32	159	149	1·07	7·9
Huddersfield Canal.	11	640	117	32	149	152	0·98	8·4

II. CANAL ROUTES FROM LIVERPOOL TO HULL.

spread over a distance of a little less than two and a half miles, occurs at Devizes, other four locks occurring at Wootton Rivers, above Devizes and twenty-one more between Devizes and Hanham. On the Trent and Mersey route from Liverpool to Birmingham there are no less than 101 locks in 114 miles. On this system there is first a steady rise through 396 feet to the level of the section through the Harecastle Tunnel, the whole of the locks being disposed upon the sections between Eastham and Dutton and between Middlewich and Harecastle; thereafter there is a drop through 168 feet to Great Haywood, succeeded by a rise of 238 feet to the level of the Coseley Tunnel section, followed by a descent through about 20 feet to Birmingham. On the route from Birmingham to the River Thames there is first a rise of 42 feet through six locks from Birmingham to Bordesley, then a descent of 202 feet through twenty-nine locks to Warwick, succeeded by a steady rise of 185 feet through twenty-nine locks to the Braunston Tunnel section, after which there is a fall of 122 feet through fifteen locks to Wolverton, followed by an ascent of 155 feet through twenty-four locks to the Tring summit level, which is about 330 feet above sea-level. Thence there is a steady fall through fifty-six locks to the Limehouse basin of the Regent's Canal. Lastly, between the Rivers Mersey and Humber, there are three routes, the particulars of which are shown in Table II.

Of these three, taking the Rochdale route as an example, there is a rise of a little under 600 feet in a distance of about sixty miles, succeeded by a fall of the same amount in a distance of about sixty-six miles, the greatest variation of level being concentrated on the comparatively short length of the Rochdale Canal, there being no less than fifty-six locks in nineteen and a quarter miles, between the junction of the Rochdale Canal with the Manchester Ship Canal Company's Bridgewater Canal at Castlefield and the summit level of the Rochdale Canal at Warland, succeeded by a fall through 350 feet, in thirty-six locks, in a distance of thirteen miles, to the junction of the Rochdale Canal with the Calder and Hebble Navigation at Sowerby Bridge. From this point there is a further fall of about 205 feet in thirty-five locks, in a distance of twenty-one and a half miles, to the junction of the Calder and Hebble Navigation with the Aire and Calder Navigation at Fall Ing, near Wakefield. Thence there is a further fall through ten locks, in thirty-one and a half miles, to the docks at Goole, from which point there is unimpeded navigation over the Rivers Ouse and Humber to Hull.

A lock consists of a chamber fitted with gates and sluices at both ends, in which the level of the water is adjusted as required

Canal.	Lock.	Dimensions in Feet.		
		Length.	Breadth.	Depth.
Bruges	Zeebrugge	846	66	26.5
Galops	Iroquois	800	54	14.0
Nordzee	Ymuiden	738	82	32.8
(Barry Docks)	Lady Windsor	647	65	59.5
Manchester	Eastham	600	80	28.0
Kaiser Wilhelm	Brunsbüttel	492	82	33.5

III. LOCKS ON SHIP CANALS.

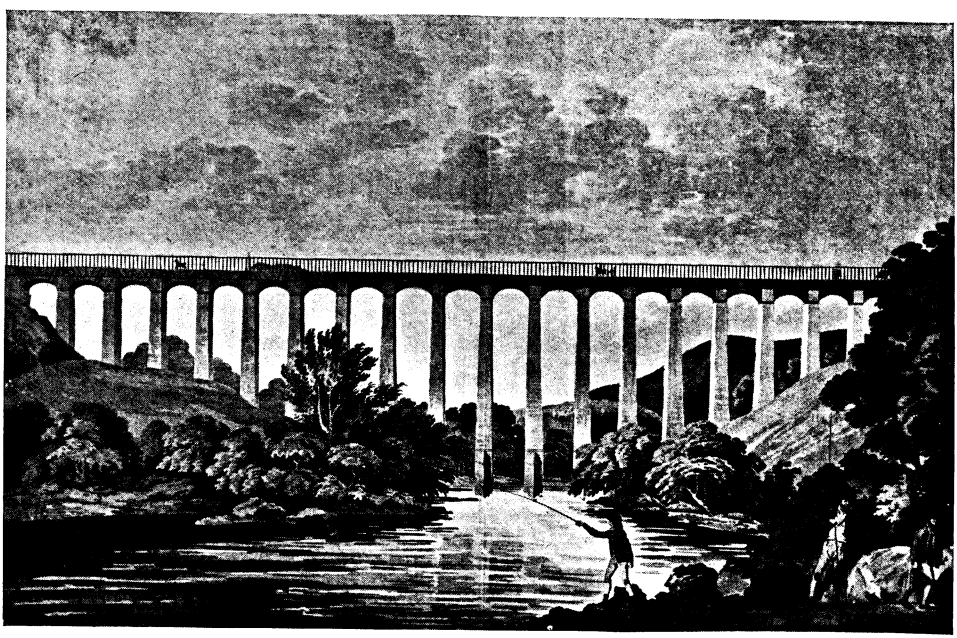
between the two reaches, which the lock connects. Thus, when the water in the lock is at the same level as that in the lower reach, the gates at that end are open, and an ascending vessel can pass into the lock. The lower gates are then closed, and water is admitted from the upper reach till the level of the water is raised to that of the upper reach; the upper gates are next opened and the vessel proceeds, the lock then being ready for the reception of a descending vessel.

The lock chamber, which is generally constructed of masonry and fitted with wooden gates, is usually rectangular in plan, but there are a few rare instances in which there are departures from this customary design. Thus, for instance, Wyre lock, twelve miles from Evesham, on the lower navigation of the Worcestershire Avon, is lozenge-shaped; and Telford, who strongly advocated the use of cast-iron for various purposes in canal construction, installed a couple of lock chambers, made of cast-iron plates bolted together, on the Chester Canal of the Shropshire Union Railways and Canal Company, near Beeston Castle, where the strata, being a quicksand, did not afford adequate stability for an ordinary masonry construction.

The dimensions and lift of locks vary considerably, as Tables III. and IV. show, according to the district traversed, the class of traffic which the navigation was intended to serve, and the amount of water available for economically working the canal.

In general, the lift varies from 6 to 8 feet, but on a few canals it is nearly twice as much as this. Thus the lift is 16 feet, 15 feet and 14 feet 6 inches respectively on the Irlam, Barton and Latchford locks, of the Manchester Ship Canal, 14 feet 6 inches on a lock at Aberfan, on the Glamorgan Canal, on which canal there are no less than twenty-four locks with a lift of 12 or more feet, and 14 feet on a lock at Tardebigge, on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, the thirty locks at this place affording a rise to the summit level of 217 feet in a distance of 1·7 miles. On a staircase of five locks at Bingley, on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, there is a lift of over 59 feet, and on the same canal at Wigan a series of twenty-one locks affords a lift of over 199 feet.

The quantity of water used in operating a lock varies directly with the dimensions and lift of the lock. Theoretically, the quantity of water which is abstracted from the summit level to operate the top lock will



THE AQUEDUCT OF PONTCYSYLLTE.

Built by Telford between 1795 and 1803, to carry a branch of the Ellesmere Canal from Frankton to Llantisilio, over the Dee at a height of 121 feet.

suffice to serve all those which are below it; but actually this is not the case and a considerably greater quantity of water is required, as there are losses due to leakage and evaporation, and as a navigable depth must be maintained in the summit level, the water so abstracted must be replaced by an inflow to the summit level, drawn from a high level storage reservoir or pumped from deep wells. One can realise what a considerable quantity of water would be required, if all the canals of the country were in vigorous operation, when it is recalled that the top water area of the seven reservoirs on the thirty-three miles of the Rochdale Canal is just a trifle less than two-thirds of a square mile; whilst it has been estimated that the average capacity of a lock on the Grand Junction Canal is about 56,000 gallons, and that no less than 125 million gallons, or about 3,500 lockfuls of water, have been used on the Trent and Mersey Canal in a single week.

If a standard minimum section, capable of accommodating a 250-ton boat, were adopted on all the through canal routes in the country, as suggested by some of the advocates of canal resuscitation, the problem of maintaining an adequate and not too costly water supply, for even a moderate traffic, would be extremely difficult on some of the canals.

It becomes, therefore, of primary importance to economise the use of the water as much as possible and with this object in view, various devices, such as duplicate locks and side ponds, are installed, or the traffic is organised so that for every descending boat there is a corresponding ascending vessel.

A duplicate lock consists of two locks, side by side, in which the water stands at different levels. When a boat passes down through the lock at high level, the water, instead of being wasted to the lower reach, is passed into the other lock, in which the water was at the lower level. Ultimately the water in both locks is at the same mean level. The remainder of the water in the lock, in which the vessel is descending, is then wasted to the lower reach, whilst the other lock is, when required, filled from the upper section. The side ponds economise the use of the water in much the same way, being situate at an intermediate level between the two reaches, and are also advantageous in permitting vessels to follow each other at short intervals without seriously lowering the level of the water in the summit reach.

Duplicate locks are in use on the Oxford Canal at Hillmorton, on the Trent and Mersey Canal between Harecastle and Wheelock, on the Grand Junction Canal at Brentford, on the Regent's Canal and other canals. Side ponds are in use on the Kennet and Avon Canal at Devizes.

The first inclined plane was installed by William Reynolds in 1788 on the Ketling Canal, upon which he raised boats, 20 feet long, 6 feet 4 inches wide, and 3 feet 10 inches draught, through a height of 73 feet, whilst resting upon a horizontal cradle, borne on wheels, running on a track, laid upon the incline. Similar inclines were also installed upon the Shropshire and Bude Canals.

On the Chard and Monkland Canals, the vessel was waterborne in an iron tank, mounted upon a truck, running upon the track, laid on the incline, which, in the latter case, rose 96 feet at an inclination of 1 in 10.

The most recently constructed is the Foxton incline, on the Leicester section of the Grand Junction Canal, opened for traffic in 1900, and affording an alternative to the passage through a flight of ten locks, in two groups of five each. At Foxton the boats are raised 75 feet, whilst water-borne, in a caisson or tank, mounted on a truck, running upon a quintuple track. There are two caissons connected by a steel cable, one of which descends whilst the other ascends, the additional energy being provided by a stationary winding engine. On the Morris Canal, in the United States, where there is a total change of level of 1,557 feet in a distance of about 101 miles, no less than 1,334 feet difference of level is overcome by twenty-three inclined planes, with a grade of 1 in 10 and an average lift of 58 feet. But this is almost exclusively the only canal in the world upon which inclines have been so generally adopted.

Canal lifts are somewhat rarely adopted, probably because of the considerable initial

Canal.	Dimensions of Lock in Feet.		
	Length.	Breadth.	Depth.
Aire and Calder (new)	460	25	9
,, ,,	215	22	9
R. Weaver	229	42·5	10·5
Rochdale	78*	15*	5·5*
,,	76†	14·3†	4·5†

* Maximum dimensions. † Minimum dimensions.

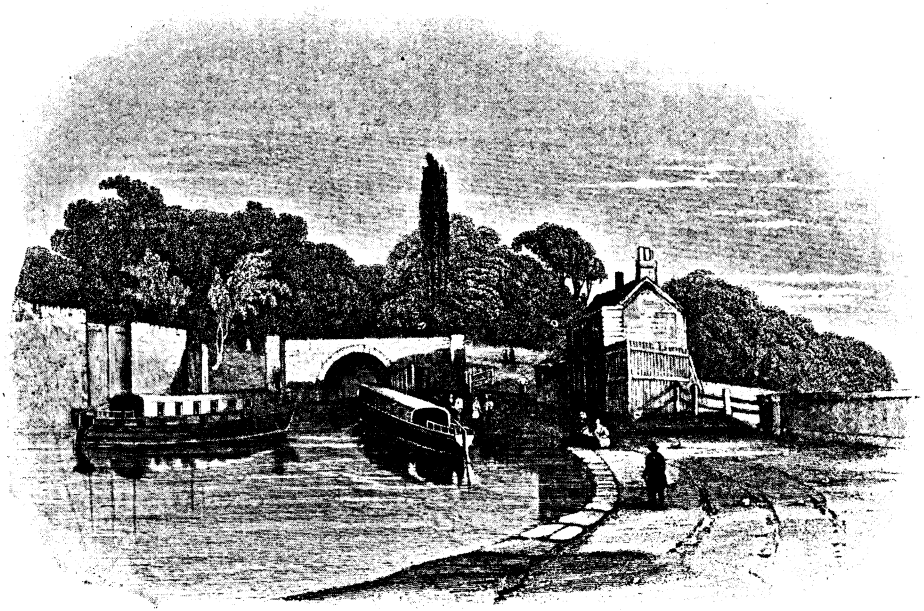
IV. LOCKS ON BARGE CANALS.

cost and also probably, though there is very little justification for this, because of the risk of dislocating the traffic, consequent upon an accident to the lift rendering it inoperative. Although canal lifts, now dismantled, were constructed between Taunton and Loudwell on the Grand Western Canal, now owned by the Great Western Railway Company, and at Tardebigge on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, now owned by the Sharpness Dock Company, the solitary existing example in this country is that at Anderton, which affords a connection between the Weaver Navigation and the Trent and Mersey Canal. A considerable traffic between the Potteries and the River Mersey is handled upon this lift, which was opened to traffic in 1875, the cost of its construction being about £48,000. It consists of two balanced tanks, or caissons, 75 feet long, by 15 feet 6 inches broad, actuated by a hydraulic ram and moving through a height of 50 feet 4 inches, one ascending as the other descends. Each caisson is partly filled with about 5 feet of water, in which the vessel floats.

A larger lift, known as the La Louvière lift, was installed on the Terneuzen Canal in 1888. This also consisted of two balanced troughs, 141 feet long, by 19 feet broad, with a depth of about 8 feet of water, capable of lifting a 400-ton barge through 50 feet 6 inches, in about two and a half minutes.

More recently a still larger lift has been constructed at Henrichenburg, on the Dortmund Ems Canal, at a cost of £122,550, in which a 600-ton vessel is lifted through a height of 52 feet 6 inches, in twelve and a half minutes, whilst floating in a huge elevator dock, supported on five large hollow cylinders floating in deep wells, the motion being imparted to the dock by large and powerful screws.

Subsequent to the construction of the



THE KENNET AND AVON CANAL: AN EARLY PRINT OF "THE STARTING PLACE OF THE SCOTCH BOAT," NEAR SYDNEY GARDENS, BATH.

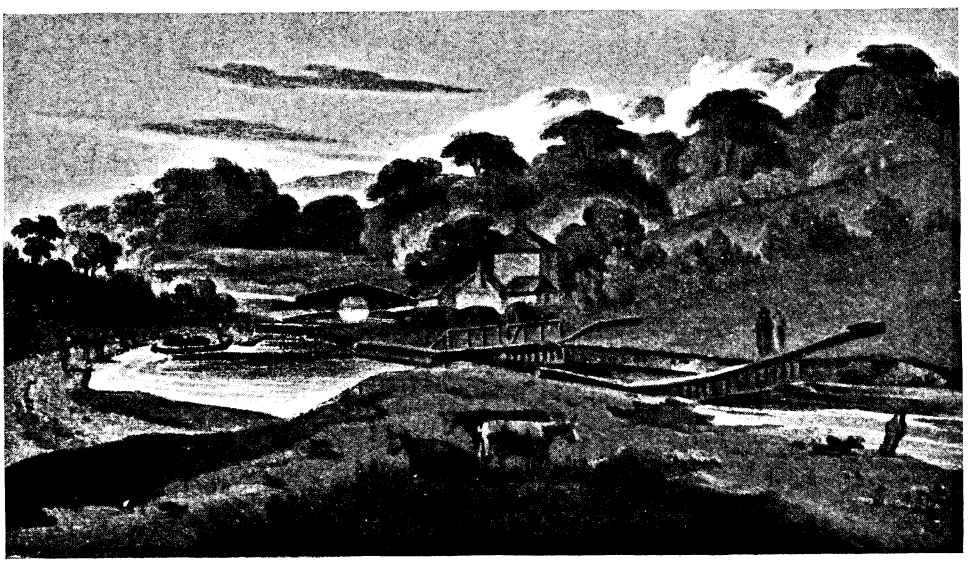
Barton aqueduct by Brindley in 1761, canals were carried over comparatively narrow valleys upon aqueducts, some of which ranked amongst the most splendid and costly engineering works of the closing decades of the eighteenth century and the opening decades of the nineteenth.

The Barton aqueduct, the forerunner of all such constructions in this country, carried the Bridgewater Canal over the River Irwell, at a height of 39 feet above it, upon three masonry arches, a central one of 57 feet span and two side arches, each of 32 feet span and 36 feet wide, connecting two approach embankments, having a total

length of about 1,100 yards. The canal passed over this, through a puddled channel 18 feet wide and 4 feet 6 inches deep, which was effective for one hundred and thirty-two years, and was in good condition in 1893. Then it was dismantled and replaced by the Barton swing aqueduct, which carries the Bridgewater Canal over the Manchester Ship Canal. This latter unique structure, weighing, with the water it contains, close upon 1,600 tons, is a watertight steel aqueduct, 235 feet long, with a waterway 18 feet wide and 6 feet deep, mounted upon a pivot and swinging to one side, to allow the passage along the Ship Canal of outward or inward bound Manchester liners, whilst, when closed, it affords a passage for Bridgewater Canal barges.

Another important aqueduct, commenced by Brindley, but completed by Rennie in 1796, carries the Lancaster Canal for a distance of 200 yards over the River Lune, near Lancaster, at a height of 62 feet above that river, upon five semicircular arches of 75 feet span. Rennie was also responsible for the design and construction of several other aqueducts, including that of Limpley Stoke, which carries the Kennet and Avon Navigation over the River Avon, near Bath. Two of the most important and picturesque aqueducts are those of Pontcysyllte and Chirk, constructed by Telford between 1795 and 1803. The former, on the Pontcysyllte branch of the Ellesmere Canal from Frankton to Llantisilio,—a part of the Shropshire Union Company's canal system—crosses the River Dee, at a height of 121 feet above the river, on nineteen masonry arches of 45 feet span, which support a cast-iron trough 11 feet 10 inches wide. A towpath 4 feet 8 inches wide, supported on iron columns rising from the floor of the trough, extends along one side of this trough, and reduces the width of the waterway to 7 feet 2 inches. The total length of this aqueduct is just upon 336 yards and the cost of its construction exceeded £47,000.

The Chirk aqueduct, four miles to the south of the Pontcysyllte aqueduct, on the same canal, crosses the River Ceriog, at a height of about 70 feet above the river, on ten arches of 40 feet span, the total length of the aqueduct being 236 yards and the cost approximating to £20,900.



THE GRAND JUNCTION CANAL: THE LOCKS NORTH OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE BRAUNSTON TUNNEL IN 1819.

Telford was justly proud of his achievements upon this canal, which, drawing water from the once sacred Deva, afforded a commercial route, piercing the woody fastnesses of gallant Glendower, in the picturesque vale of Llangollen. Sir Walter Scott accorded the work a high tribute of praise, in describing it to Southey.

On the 4,048 miles of canal in this country there are no less than sixty-three tunnels, with an aggregate length of 33·4 miles, of which twelve tunnels, as shown in the following table, have an aggregate length of 18·1 miles.

Name of Tunnel.	Name of Canal.	Length.		Minimum Height of Roof above Water, in feet.	Minimum Surface Width of Water, in feet.
		Miles.	Yards.		
Standedge . . .	Huddersfield Narrow . . .	3	176	6·7	7·7
Sapperton . . .	Thames and Severn	2	288	10·0	11·4
Lappal	Birmingham	2	275	6·0	7·7
Dudley	,, ...	1	1,412	5·7	8·4
Norwood . . .	Chesterfield	1	1,342	4·8	8·8
Butterley . . .	Cromford	1	1,303	8·2	9·0
Blisworth . . .	Grand Junction	1	1,296	10·7	15·0
Netherton . . .	Birmingham	1	1,267	15·7	17·0
New Harecastle .	Trent and Mersey	1	1,166	8·8	9·2
Old ,, .	,, ,, ...	1	1,137	5·8	8·5
King's Norton . .	Gloucester and Birmingham .	1	990	12·5	16·0
Braunston . . .	Grand Junction	1	282	12·3	15·8

V. TWELVE ENGLISH CANAL TUNNELS WITH A LENGTH EXCEEDING ONE MILE.

Including the above-named twelve tunnels, there are forty-seven tunnels, aggregating 32·8 miles, with lengths exceeding 100 yards.

It is somewhat interesting in this respect to compare the lengths of the twelve tunnels given in Table V. with the forty-three tunnels of greater length than one mile, on English and Welsh railways, which have an aggregate length of 71·6 miles. Only four of them, given in Table VI., have a greater length than three miles, and only ten have a greater length than two miles.

If one excepts the tunnel workings at Worsley, the oldest tunnel is that at Harecastle, on the summit level of the Trent and

Name of Tunnel.	Name of Railway Co.	Length in miles.
Severn . . .	Great Western . .	4·35
Totley	Midland	3·54
Standedge. . .	London and North Western	3·03
Woodhead . .	Great Central . .	3·01

VI. RAILWAY TUNNELS OVER THREE MILES IN LENGTH.

Mersey Canal, which was commenced by Brindley in 1766 and completed in 1777. Some forty-seven years later Telford, in the course of improving the route to accommodate its heavy traffic, cut a second and somewhat larger tunnel, known as the New Tunnel, alongside the first, which thenceforth bore the appellation of the Old Tunnel. This canal, belonging to the North Staffordshire Railway Company, is the only one possessed of a double tunnel, which is of considerable advantage in obviating a congestion of traffic, since all south-bound traffic passes through the Old Tunnel and all north-bound traffic through the other.

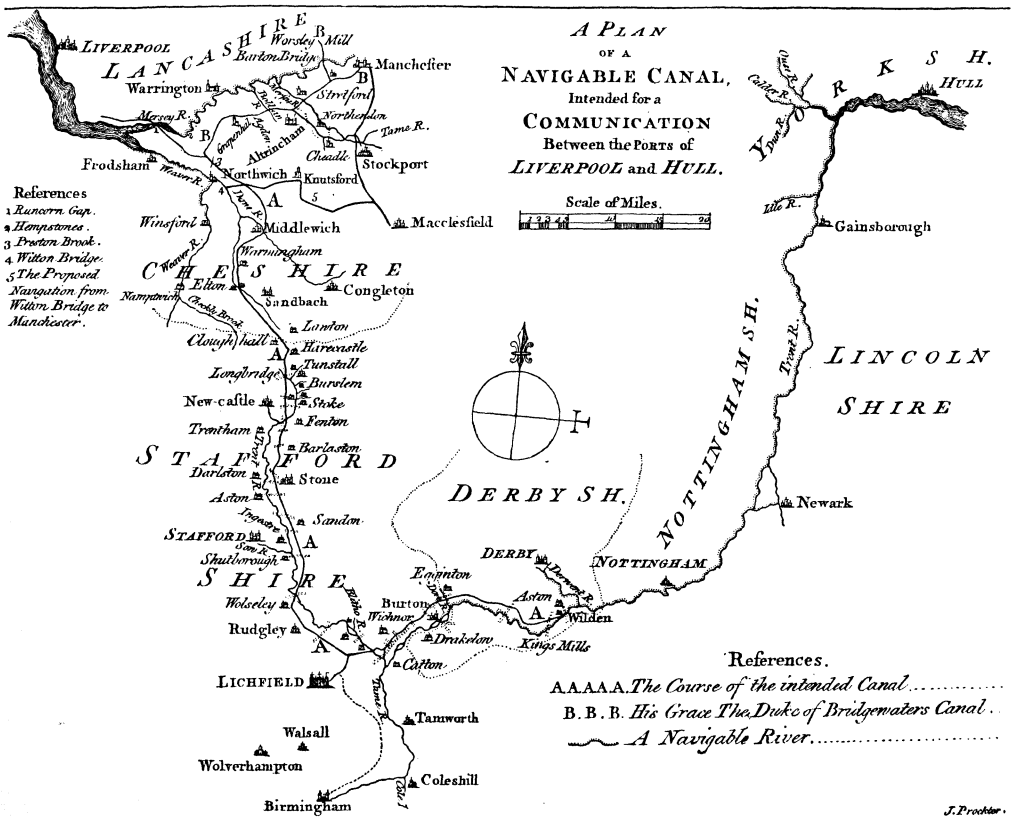
The Netherton tunnel constructed between 1855 and 1858, to afford a connection between the main line of the Birmingham Canal Navigations and the Dudley Canal, owned by the same company, is the most recently constructed lengthy canal tunnel in this country.

It marks a big advance on the older canal, opened eighty-one years earlier, for the waterway is twice as wide, the minimum headroom above the water surface is 45 per cent. greater, and in addition it has a towpath five feet wide on either side, and is lighted throughout with gas lamps, refinements unknown in the older tunnel.

There are only twenty-one canal tunnels, with a total length of just under five miles, provided with towpaths, three of which—those at Coseley and Netherton, on the Birmingham Canal Navigations, and the Newbold Tunnel, on the Oxford Canal—have towpaths on both sides, and eighteen others, aggregating 2·9 miles, have towpaths on one side only. Therefore all boats traversing the other 27·8 miles of tunnel must either be towed by a steam-tug, legged, shafted, or worked through the tunnels. The width of the waterway through about seven or eight of the tunnels is sufficient to permit of the passage of boats from either end at any time, some others can be seen through from end to end, but in most cases, the traffic is only allowed to pass in one direction at certain specified times. There are two exceptions to this. On the Huddersfield Narrow Canal a boat may enter the Standedge Tunnel at any time, subject to a telephonic assurance, that no boat has previously entered the remote end, and on the Shrewsbury Canal boats may enter either end at any time, subject to the rule that, if two should enter at opposite ends, that boat which first reaches the centre mark has the

right of passage through the rest of the tunnel. For the passage of some of the large tunnels the companies provide tugs, which tow trains of boats from one end or the other at specified hours. Excepting the chain tug which works to and fro on the Islington Tunnel of the Regent's Canal Company, these tugs are mostly screw-propeller steam-tugs, some of which, such as those working on the tunnel sections of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, are double-ended, so that they may run to and fro without turning in the basins at the end of the tunnels. A boat is legged through a tunnel by men who may be the boatmen or professional leggers, hired for the trip through the tunnel, lying on their backs upon the cabin of the boat, or upon wings, which are bracket boards projecting from the side of the boat and pushing with their feet against the wall of the tunnel. Boats are worked through the Cardiff Tunnel of the Glamorgan Canal, the Dunhampstead Tunnel of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, the Hincaster Tunnel of the Lancaster Canal, the King's Norton Tunnel of the Stratford-on-Avon Canal, the Savernake Tunnel on the Kennet and Avon Canal and the Shrewley Tunnel of the Warwick and Birmingham Canal, by pulling on a chain, rope, handrail, or series of handles fitted to the side wall of the tunnel. In the passage through the Lappal Tunnel of the Dudley Canal, the traffic is assisted by the production of an artificial current, which flows in alternate directions every three hours, the end levels of the water being varied by the alternate action of pumps and sluices.

There are several other constructive details of importance, but as they have a professional rather than a general interest I do not propose to describe them here, but to proceed in my next article to a discussion of the various causes which have given rise to the decadence of canal-borne traffic.



A PLAN PUBLISHED IN 1766.



"CORONA." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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"MORNING." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

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"He wriggled most of the way there on his stomach."

OUR PATROL.

BY JESSIE POPE.

HARRISON, Smith, and Porky Ratliffe had come over in my garden to help me kill time, it being the slack end of the holidays, with absolutely nothing to do. Harrison was stopping up the nozzle of the hose with splinters of wood (the gardener having gone up to the kitchen to see what time it was—or so he said). Smith was practising killing rats with a broomstick, and a bit of waste rag tied up for the rat—which of course he killed every time. Porky was eating an orange—or it may have been chocolate; it was one or the other, I know, his mouth always being either brown *or* yellow at the corners. And I was shying stones into the water-can, and had half filled it at ten yards. I'm Calloway. We had had pretty rotten holidays and were feeling fairly sick with things in general.

"It's all jolly fine," said Harrison, suddenly dropping the nozzle and picking a splinter out of his finger, "for parents to grumble about the length of the holidays; it's precious little they do to help us enjoy them. To-day, for instance, my pater has gone for a week-end's golf, and mater and the girls have gone to a *matinée*. I can't say they forgot me altogether, because at breakfast they were saying as it was a nice day, it would be a good opportunity for me to help our man mend the shed roof, which means I hold the tools and hand him the nails—not much!"

"You don't suppose they want us to *enjoy* ourselves!" said Smith, whacking the rag rat over the wall. "Their one idea is to keep us out of mischief and in a condition of subdued slavery. I'm supposed to be sitting in a fuggy room at the present moment, swatting at a holiday task. I thought that even slacking over here was better than that."

"I shall be glad enough when it's time to go back," said Porky, taking his face out of an orange (it *was* an orange). "I feed with the kids in the nursery, all sorts of sloppy muck, and if I *do* find anything in the pantry I fancy, they say it's for 'the room.' Beastly sauce!"

"I think I have the rottenest time of the

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lot, anyhow," said I, "living, as I do, alone with my grandfather, and his nerves being a bit rocky. I daren't make a sound indoors, and practically live in this beastly garden. There's a placard on the landing: 'Not the slightest noise must be made here between 9.30 p.m. and 7.30 a.m.' and another one in the hall outside the library door: 'Not the slightest noise must be made here between 2.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.' That's when he's having his nap."

"And wants to make all the noise himself," said Smith, but nobody laughed much. We were all feeling too jolly sick about the selfishness of our people, when all at once the gate clicked and Ross came up the path.

Ross is not so much our superior in the matter of age. In fact, Harrison is a month older, being fourteen next December. But he has got a sort of way of making chaps follow his example and do what he wants them to without arguing much about it. His ancestors are Scotch, and his hair is also red, but he has a Cockney accent himself, being always used to it.



"We were having a friendly sparring match."

"Have any of you chaps done any scouting?" he said in his off-hand, superior way.

"I have," said Porky at once. Ross looked rather sold.

"Where?" he said.

"Up at the tennis club for my aunties," said Porky. Ross laughed, and looked relieved.

"I don't mean scouting for tennis balls, young Porky," he said. "I mean tracking the spoor of enemies, and finding out their secret ambushes; and if there don't happen to be enemies in the country at the time, murderers or thieves will do as well."

"And what if there don't happen to be any murderers and thieves?" said Smith.

"Why, you have to practise all the ways of being ready for domestic emergencies when they do come, and keep your hand in for the enemy, so to speak, by trying it on your own people first. As a matter of fact, I know a good bit about it. A cousin of mine belongs to a regular patrol of boy scouts, and wanted me to; but I don't care for the idea of joining another chap's patrol, being rather keen to have one of my own and run it on my own lines, quite unattached to Baden-Powell's lot. It's to be called 'Ross's Patrol,' and I wondered if any of you chaps would like to join."

"I should, if there's any fun to be got out of it," said I, and the others agreed.

"I don't know what you mean by *fun*," said Ross, "but there's plenty of risk and danger, and you'll be serving your country; and it may be when the invaders come — as they may at any moment —that 'Ross's Patrol,' by some magnificent act of gallantry—which it never occurred to the whole of the British Army to do—will turn the tide of battle and save England."

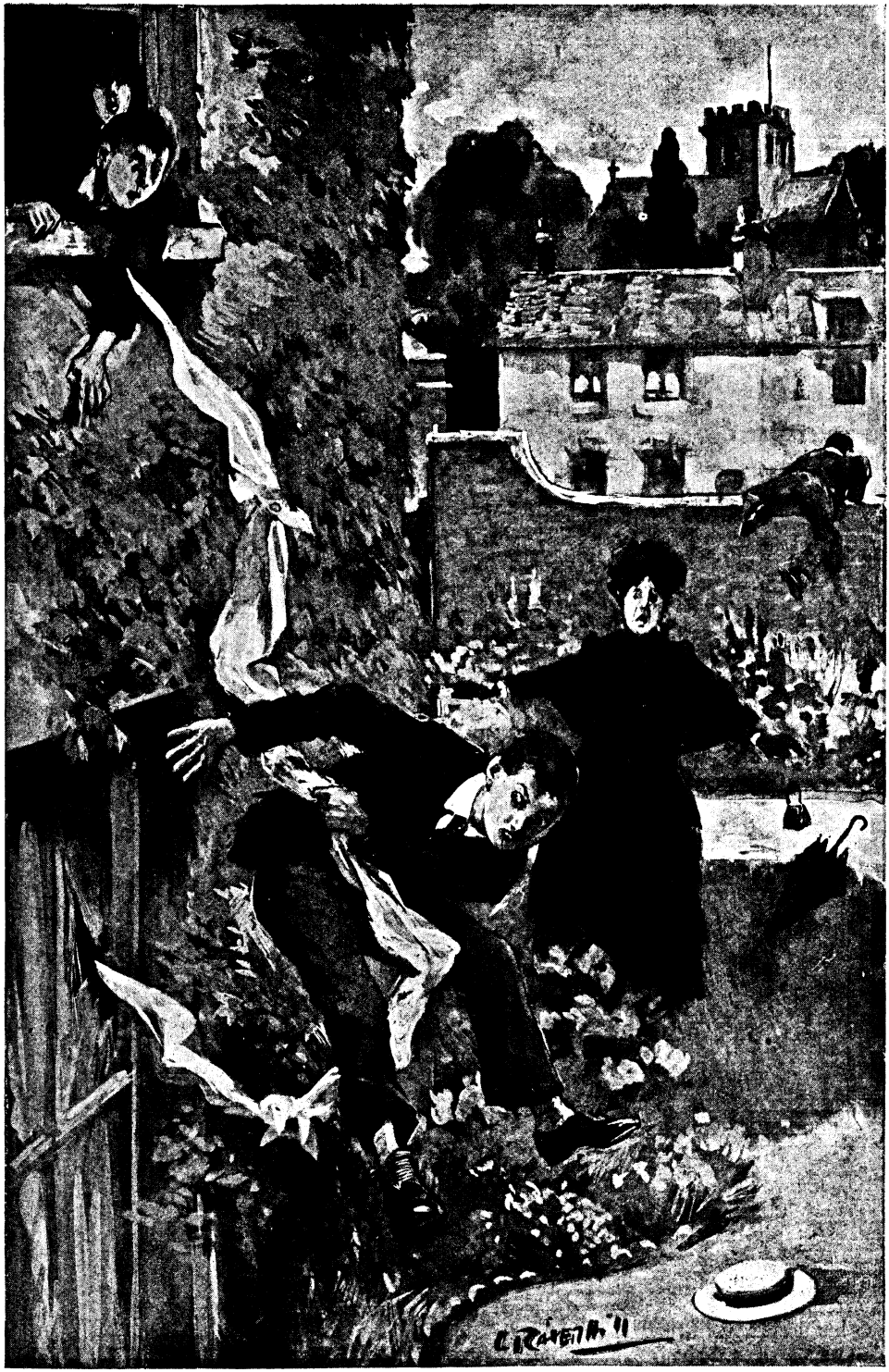
Ross always could jaw well, and his eloquent words made us feel as keen as mustard.

"By Jove, yes!" said Smith, "there'd be all about us in the papers, with our photographs."

"I expect somebody will stand us a dinner," said Porky.

"Fifty thousand, you mean," said Harrison. "Very likely they'd give us a title and a pension apiece."

"And the freedom of the big cities," I added.



"We had to let him down with a run."

"What does that mean?" said Porky. Not being sure, I did not answer, but looked at Ross.

"Why," said Ross grandly, "I understand when you have the freedom of a city, it means that you can get anything you want in that city free of charge."

That settled it, and he put our names down in his pocket-book, and enrolled us as "Ross's Patrol, or The Grey Wolves," while Porky remarked, in an undertone, that if we could have our choice, he should prefer the freedom of Banbury.

"Now, the great things for a scout to learn," said Ross, "are two in number—obedience to your leader (that's me), and observation of everything above and around you, and even under your feet."

"Why under your feet?" asked Harrison.

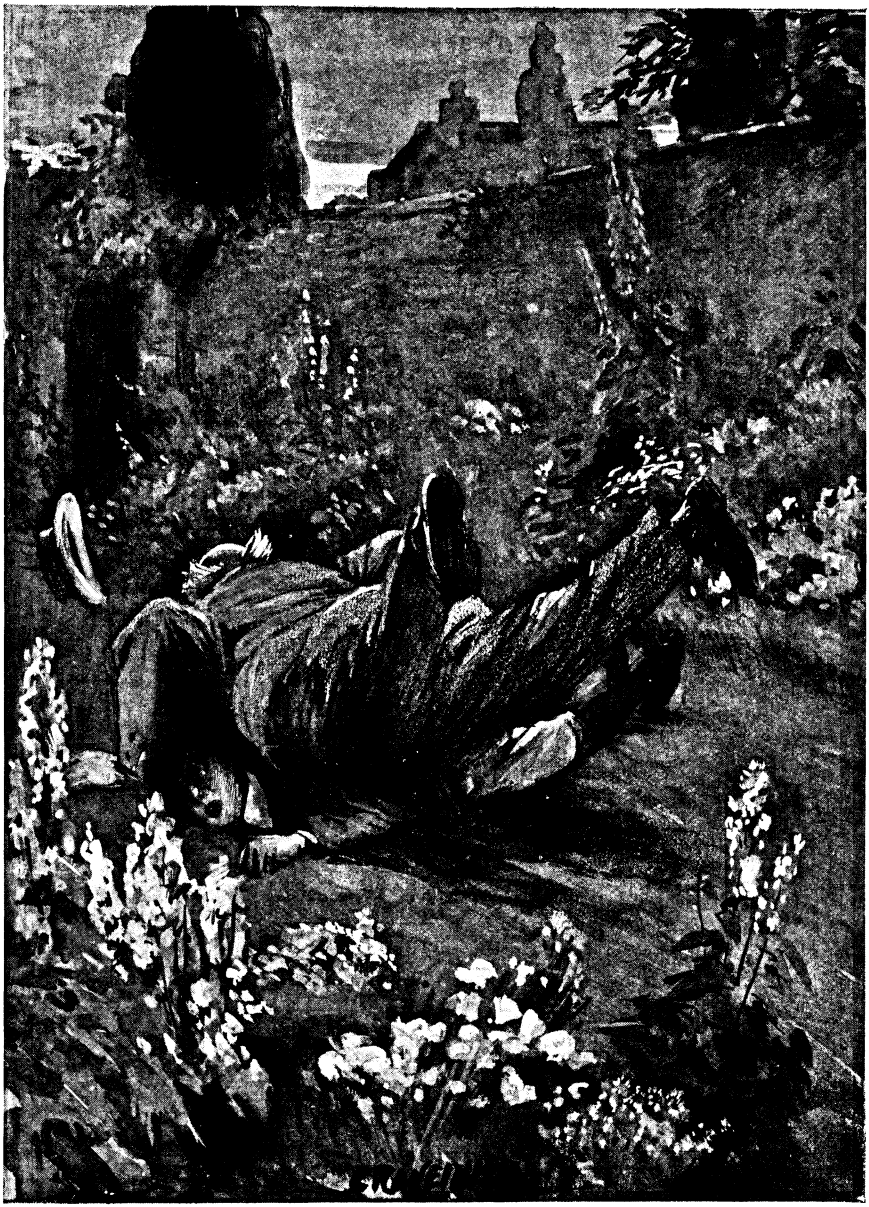
"So that you can look out for suspicious trails, and also that you may find lost valuables——"

"Oh! of course," broke in Porky, his face brightening.

"And restore them to their owners," continued Ross. Porky looked a bit dropped on at this—in fact, we all did; but, as I said, Ross is an authoritative sort of chap, and, after all, we were pledged to obey him, and in any case it would be foolish not to do so *until* we found something valuable, which, judging from my luck up to now, might never take place.

It then being evening, Ross said we would start scouting the next day with some despatch-running on Hangman's Heath, and gave us the secret sign by which to know each other, which was to cross the two first fingers over the bridge of the nose. I should have thought we knew each other fairly well without that, and Porky looked so cheeky when he did the sign to me, that I was going to punch his head for him, but Ross said "No ragging!" which reminded us of the thorough seriousness of the thing.

As it happened, unfortunately, the despatch-running was a rank failure, owing principally to Ross's tremendous keenness. He was the despatch-runner—which was right enough, as he knew most about it—and he had arranged to run from the old windmill, just outside the town, across the heath to the Polliton Arms, an inn on the London Road. The rest of us chaps were set in various ambushes and were to jump out on him and seize his despatches—that is, of course, if we could spot him, which unfortunately we didn't, though I, for one, certainly kept a sharp look out for quite a long time. It seems, though the distance was about a mile, he wriggled most of the way there on his stomach, which showed, of course, what a born scout he was, though it was rather bad for his breeches. Anyhow, he got there without showing a sign of himself, and after waiting some time he come back to look for us. Unfortunately he came upon me just after I had left my ambush and joined Smith's, and, not thinking much about scouting at the moment, we were having a friendly sparring match, and I was certainly scoring on points. This got Ross's wool off a bit and he was very sarcastic, and we followed him to look for the others with our tails down. Harrison was about a quarter of a mile away, running after a butterfly he was very keen to catch and send to the British Museum, as it seemed to be a fine specimen. Ross jawed him properly, but when we came to look for young Porky, he had entirely vanished, and I think Ross got in a bit of a funk about him, as he is of a very tender age, in spite of his cheek, and has an invalid mother, when all at once Smith gave a shout, and there was young Porky sitting under a bush eating a large salmon-and-shrimp sandwich. Ross court-martialled him, and his defence was that there was no fun in waiting and doing nothing, and he thought he would take the opportunity to have his lunch. As a punishment Ross emptied his pockets, and ate the contents, where possible, for Porky's pockets are rather weird and take some eating through. He has his lunch pocket and his toffee pocket and his fruit pocket, and his miscellaneous pocket—he calls that his messy pocket for short, but they are all that. Then Ross told us that we had shown ourselves absolutely rotten as scouts, and that if England was going to depend on us for her safety, she was in a jolly poor way. That bucked us up a bit, and we all practised the cry of the grey wolf, under his instructions, and really we got on A 1 at it, and even Ross said he was satisfied with our progress. A wolf's howl, as most people know, begins with a kind of bark and ends something like a cross between a motor-siren and a fog-horn, and it's a frightfully difficult thing to do really well, and though Ross, as I said, was satisfied with our progress, he said we must practise it at home whenever we got an opportunity. Owing to my grandfather's nerves I practised in the shrubbery next morning, and at the third howl I saw the cook suddenly appear at the kitchen door with a jug in her hand, and heard her say to



"I was squashed pretty flat."

the other slavey she thought she heard the milkman about, which would have been rather hurtful to my feelings if I hadn't come to the conclusion that an ignorant woman who doesn't know a wolf from a milkman is not worth troubling about. But poor old Harrison had really rather a frightful experience over his howl practice. He's rather a shy chap, and of course hadn't told his people anything about our Patrol, and went up to the attic at the top of the house to do his howling, so that nobody would hear. He got so keen over it that he never heard steps on the stairs, and he was lying on his back on a pile of moth-eaten rugs, howling for all he was worth and kicking his legs in the air in enjoyment, when the door burst open and his mother and the governess rushed in and began slobbering over him and mauling him about and asking

him where he felt the dreadful pain. Being, as I said, a shy kid, and very close, as we all were, about the Patrol, he couldn't make any explanation. He told them, however, he was all right. But his mater said she knew he said that to spare her feelings, and sent for the doctor. Now, the doctor happened to be quite a young chap just starting, and hard up for a job, and he said poor old Harrison's stomach was out of order, and gave him some muck with a most awful taste, to take every three hours.

However, as Ross said when Harrison told him about it, the domestic circle, though full of risks and dangers for us, owing to it being practically in the power of unintelligent creatures of the female sex, was all the same a fine practice-ground for emergencies which the said females always lose their heads over, but which would give us scouts a chance of showing our grit and getting into the local paper; and he asked us to meet at his place that afternoon, when his aunt, with whom he lives, would be out calling, and we could have a fire-drill. When we got there, Ross took us up to his bedroom on the second floor, and jawed a bit about a fatal fire which had lately taken place, when many lives might have been saved if people had kept cooler. He said the great things to know were, first, how to tear sheets up into ropes, and second, how to rescue insensible persons from the fumes, and he said it was our duty to practise both, because when the invaders came and set fire to all our houses, such knowledge would be jolly useful. We started with the first, and Ross ordered us to take the sheets off his bed and tear them into long strips; and when we hesitated, he said that if his aunt was at all annoyed, he would sleep in blankets; in fact, he considered it part of a scout's duty to do so, and, in any case, he said he was prepared to sacrifice his aunt's feelings for the sake of the country. So, of course, we tore up the sheets and twisted them into ropes, and let Porky down to start with, as he is the lightest, in spite of all the tuck he manages to put away. Porky went down quite well, and then Ross insisted on going down himself. When he was about half-way, young Porky, who was waiting at the bottom, began to yell out that he could see Ross's aunt coming back. Ross looked and saw her too. Unfortunately the people she had been to call on had said "Not at home" to her, and that had put her in a bit of a bate to start with. Ross called to us to pull him up again, and Porky bunked over the wall and ran all the way home. It is much easier to let people down than to pull them up, as we found, and Ross caught hold of the ivy to help himself up, and, unfortunately, in his struggles kicked his foot through the drawing-room window, which he was just dangling over at the time, and we had to let him down with a run just as his aunt came hurrying up in an awful funk that Ross was killed. As a matter of fact, he wasn't hurt a bit, and she got in a terrific rage in consequence, and especially when she saw the drawing-room window and the sheets. We had to wait half an hour while she wrote each of us a note to take home, and Ross's pocket-money was stopped indefinitely, and I believe he had the opportunity of sleeping in blankets for the rest of the day.

However, when the Patrol met the next time, Ross said he certainly considered our fire-drill practice a success, though the only thing he regretted was that we had had no chance of rescuing an unconscious person from the fumes. Of course, as he said, it was no use practising with chaps of our own size, because when the test came, it would be a grown up and possibly a very stout person we should have to deal with.

"What about your gardener?" said Smith to me; "he's stout enough, and you know he goes sound asleep in the potting-shed every afternoon, owing to his dinner beer."

"Yes," said Ross, "he'd be just the chap to practise on."

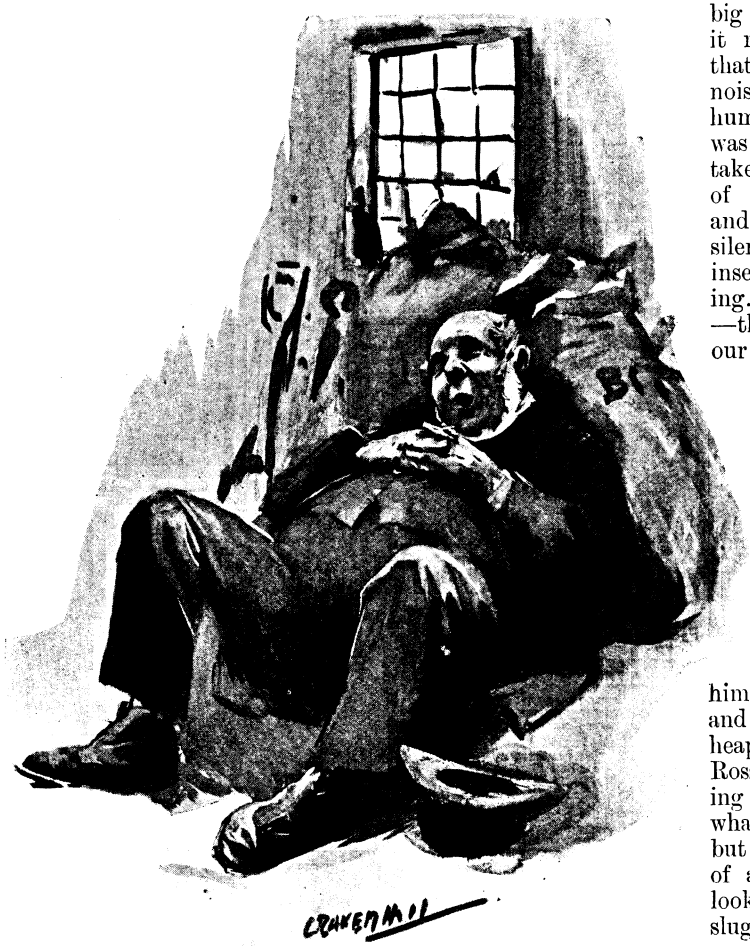
"So he might be," I replied; "but the unfortunate part is he would complain to my grandpater, who is about fed up with my scouting as it is, owing to something that has lately happened. It was yesterday evening, and I thought some of you chaps might be about—in fact, I was pretty sure I could hear footsteps approaching, so I tried Ross's dodge of lying down and putting my ear to the ground. I could hear the sound much clearer like that, and had no doubt the sound *was* footsteps, slow and stealthy ones; and of course I thought of burglars, and waited a few moments longer before giving the alarm, when all at once I got an awful kick in the ribs, and a heavy body came plump on the top of me. It was grandpater; he's very short-sighted, and hadn't seen me lying there, and I was looking the other way. I was squashed pretty flat, and of course he was a bit shaken up and in a wax as well, and I thought he'd have had a fit when I explained to him what I was doing. Therefore, I think if the gardener complains to-day, he will probably do something very

serious to me, for it's pretty clear he has no sympathy with scouting."

"But the gardener won't complain," said Ross; "because, if he does, he'll have to confess, first, that he drinks beer with his dinner, and your grandpater's a teetotaler himself and expects his servants to be the same, as you've often told me; and, secondly, that he was fast asleep at a time when he ought to be doing his work. Your grandpater would have all that up against him."

"Yes," I replied, "but he's got more up against me, being still bruised and stiff from his fall."

"Well," said Ross, "it would be a sin to miss such a fine opportunity, and, of course, if you funk it, you can stand out, and we'll take the job on by ourselves."



"It really seemed wonderful that such terrible and weird noises could come out of a human mouth and nose."

Of course, I wasn't going to have that, so it was arranged that I should give them the signal when the gardener had safely dropped off, the next afternoon, which I did, and after tying wet cloths round our mouths and nostrils, we crawled into the potting-shed on our hands and knees, because, as everybody knows, in the case of fumes the lower air is clearer than the higher. The gardener was not a very big man, though stout, and it really seemed wonderful that such terrible and weird noises could come out of a human mouth and nose. It was arranged for Ross to take his head, and the rest of us his arms and legs, and we gathered round him silently as he lay practically insensible on a heap of sacking. Ross said: "One—two—three, go!" and we seized our particular parts of him, and, without loss of time, half-dragged, half-carried him through the potting-shed. His snorts were frightful, and so were his struggles when he opened his eyes and saw us with the white cloths on our faces; but we stuck to it, and successfully got him out and saved his life, and dropped him on a low heap of top-mould. Then Ross stood over him, panting and resolute, to hear what he had got to say; but instead of the volley of awful language we were looking forward to, the sluggish brute just shut his eyes, turned over, dug his shoulder a little further into the mould, and went fast asleep again, merely thinking, I suppose, he had had a bit of a nightmare.

That was, in fact, as Ross said, the greatest success we had in emergency practice, and the only thing we undertook that went absolutely without a hitch, and we were encouraged to run more ambitious schemes, which led to the final tremendous disaster which was the end of the Patrol.

Ross decided that we had done enough domestic emergency business for the time being, and that at 7 p.m. the following day we would have a camp in the old mill before-mentioned, and make that the base for some important military manœuvres. We were to muster, armed with sticks and bull's-eye lanterns, at 6.30 p.m. outside Ross's back gate; but when the time arrived, Harrison and Porky failed to answer to their names. After waiting about, Ross said we had better go on without them, as doubtless some trouble at home prevented them from coming, and we marched with stealthy silence to the old mill—meeting, however, with no opposition on the way. We had nearly got there, and were, in fact, crossing the bridge out of the town, when suddenly we saw a strange light flickering in the door of the deserted mill, and next moment perceived that the interior was in flames.

"Halt!" shouted Ross. "The mill's on fire! That's a bit of luck. This will get the Patrol in the paper. We shall be the first to give the alarm. Smith, go and smash the fire-alarm in North Street! Calloway" (that's me), "smash the one in the High Road! Look sharp about it! And I'll sprint straight for the fire-station." Off we went in different directions as hard as we could leg it. Smith smashed his alarm all right, and I should have done mine, only a policeman nabbed me in the act. However, when I explained the matter to him, he smashed it himself (which I was rather glad to think of afterwards), and I ran back to the mill, not to miss any of the fun. The fire was apparently still burning, though it did not seem to have spread at all; and suddenly, as I hurried up to have a closer look, I heard a wolf's howl from inside, and Harrison and Porky calmly walked out of the burning mill to meet me.

"You're jolly late," said Harrison.

"The fire!" was all I could gasp, being pretty blown.

"Yes," said Porky, "we thought you'd think it was rather a good dodge. We got here early and lit a big camp fire inside while we were waiting. Where are the others?"

"Gone—to fetch—the fire-engine!" I panted. "We thought the mill was on fire!" And as I spoke we heard the metallic clank and rattle of horses' hoofs and the approaching shout of "Hi! Hi! Hi!" along the High Road—the engine had, in fact, turned out in record time. "Oh, you footling idiots!" ejaculated Harrison.

"What shall we do?" cried Porky, as white as a sheet.

"Put it out and bunk!" I cried; and in two minutes, with some river water in a bucket, we swilled and stamped it out as the fire-engine dashed across the bridge, with Ross seated triumphantly among the firemen, and a clattering crowd coming full pace behind. Then we bunked—at least, Porky and I did, and Smith didn't show up when he came back from smashing his alarm and found how things were going; but Harrison waited and explained matters and stood by Ross all through, and I believe they had a pretty thick time of it.

I did not see either of them again before they went back to school, for which I was rather thankful; I believe their paters had to fork out compensation for the firemen, but, of course, the whole thing was an accident, though nobody believed it. However, Ross bore us no malice for bunking, for soon after the beginning of the term I had a letter from Ross saying the Patrol was disbanded for good, and he had joined one of Baden-Powell's patrols of boy scouts himself, and advised us to do the same, as it was better fun and less responsibility. Which we did, because once a scout, always a scout, and when you've really made up your mind to save your country, you are in honour bound to see the thing through.

ON THE RIVER.

SINCE dawn the dipping paddles
Have sped the miles away;
And now they lag and pause, and flash
Red as the dying day.

Since dawn our questing spirits
Have toiled against the stream;
And now the West has banked his fire
With purple ash of dream.

Now rest ye, souls and sinews,
Until to-morrow's dawn.
Mine Host has lit a pearly lamp,
The whisp'ring shades are drawn.

THEODORE ROBERTS.

THE KING OF THE FLAMING HOOPS.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

THE white, scarred face of the mountain looked straight east, over a vast basin of tumbled, lesser hills, dim black forests, and steel-blue loops of a far-winding water. Here and there long, level strata of pallid mist seemed to support themselves on the tree-tops, their edges fading off into the startling transparency that comes upon the air with the first of dawn. But that was in the lower world. Up on the solitary summit of White Face the daybreak had arrived. The jagged crest of the peak shot sudden radiances of flame-crimson, then bathed itself in a flow of rose-pinks and thin, indescribable reds and pulsating golds. Swiftly, as the far horizon leapt into blaze, the aerial flood spread down the mountain-face, revealing and transforming. It reached the mouth of a cave on a narrow ledge. As the splendour poured into the dark opening, a tawny shape, long and lithe and sinewy, came padding forth, noiseless as itself, as if to meet and challenge it.

Half emerging from the entrance upon the high rock-platform which formed its threshold, the puma halted, head uplifted and forepaws planted squarely to the front. With wide, palely bright eyes she stared out across the tremendous and mysterious landscape. As the coloured glory rushed down the mountain, rolling back the blue-grey transparency of shadow, those inscrutable eyes swept every suddenly revealed glade, knoll, and waterside where deer or elk might by chance be pasturing.

She was a magnificent beast, this puma, massive of head and shoulder almost as a lioness, and in her calm scrutiny of the spaces unrolling before her gaze was a certain air of overlordship, as if her supremacy had gone long unquestioned. Suddenly, however, her attitude changed. Her eyes narrowed, her mighty muscles drew themselves together like springs being upcoiled, she half crouched, and her head turned sharply to the left, listening. Far down the narrow ledge which afforded the trail to her den, she had caught the sound of something approaching.

As she listened, she crouched lower and lower, and her eyes began to burn with a thin, green flame. Her ears would flatten back savagely, then lift themselves again to interrogate the approaching sounds. Her anger at the intrusion upon her private domain was mixed with some apprehension, for behind her, in a warm corner of the den, curled up in a soft and furry ball like kittens, were her two sleeping cubs.

Her trail being well marked and with her scent strong upon it, she knew it could be no ignorant blunderer that drew near. It was plainly an enemy, and an arrogant enemy, since it made no attempt at stealth. The steps were not those of any hunter, white man or Indian, of that she presently assured herself. With this assurance her anxiety diminished and her anger increased. Her tail, long and thick, doubled in thickness and began to jerk sharply from side to side. Crouching to the belly, she crept all the way out upon the ledge and peered cautiously around a jutting shoulder of rock.

The intruder was not yet in sight, because the front of White Face, though apparently a sheer and awful precipice when viewed from the valley, was in fact wrinkled with gullies and buttresses and bucklings of the tortured strata. But the sound of his coming was now quite intelligible to her. That softly ponderous tread, that careless displacing of stones, those undisguised sniffings and mumblings could come only from a bear, and a bear frankly looking for trouble. Well, he was going to find what he was looking for. With an antagonism handed down to her by a thousand ancestors, the great puma hated bears.

Many miles north of White Face, on the other side of that ragged mountain-ridge to which he formed an isolated and towering outpost, there was a fertile valley which had just been invaded by settlers. On every hand awoke the sharp barking of the axe. Rifle shots startled the echoes. Masterful voices and confident human laughter filled all the wild inhabitants with wonder and dismay.

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The undisputed lord of the range was an old silver-tip grizzly, of great size and evil temper. Furious at the unexpected trespass on his sovereignty, yet well aware of his powerlessness against the human creature that could strike from very far off with lightning and thunder, he had made up his mind at once to withdraw to some remote range. Nevertheless, he had lingered for some days, sullenly expecting he knew not what. These formless expectations were most unpleasantly fulfilled when he came upon a man in a canoe paddling close in by the steep shore of the lake. He had hurled himself blindly down the bank, raging for vengeance, but when he reached the water's edge, the man was far out of reach. Then, while he stood there wavering, half minded to swim in pursuit, the man had spoken with the lightning and the thunder, after the terrifying fashion of his kind. The bear had felt himself stung near the tip of the shoulder, as if by a million wasps at once, and the fiery anguish had brought him to his senses.

It was no use trying to fight man, so he had dashed away into the thickets, and not halted till he had put miles between himself and the inexplicable enemy.

For two days, with occasional stops to forage or to sleep, the angry grizzly had travelled southward, heading towards the lonely peak of White Face. As the distance from his old haunts increased, his fears diminished ; but his anger grew under the ceaseless fretting of that wound on his neck just where he could not reach to lick and soothe it. The flies, however, could reach it very well, and did. As a consequence, by the time he reached the upper slopes of White Face, he was in a mood to fight anything. He would have charged a regiment, had he suddenly found one in his path. When he turned up a stone for the grubs, beetles, and scorpions which lurked beneath it, he would send it flying with a savage sweep of his paw. When he caught a rabbit, he smashed it flat in sheer fury, as if he cared more to mangle than to eat.

At last he stumbled upon the trail of a puma. As he sniffed at it, he became, if possible, more angry than ever. Pumas he had always hated. He had never had a chance to satisfy his grudge, for never had one dared to face his charge ; but they had often snarled down defiance at him from some limb of oak or pine beyond his reach. He flung himself forward upon the trail with vengeful ardour. When he realised, from the fact that it was a much used trail and led up among the barren rocks, that it was none other than the trail to the puma's lair, his satisfaction increased. He would be sure to find either the puma at home, or the puma's young unguarded.

When the puma, at last, saw him emerge around a curve of the trail, and noted his enormous stature, she gave one longing, wistful look back over her shoulder to the shadowed nook wherein her cubs lay sleeping. Had there been any chance to get them both safely away, she would have shirked the fight, for their sakes. But she could not carry them both in her mouth at once up the face of the mountain. She would not desert either one. She hesitated a moment, as if doubtful whether or not to await attack in the mouth of the cave. Then she crept further out, where the ledge was not three feet wide, and crouched flat, silent, watchful, rigid, in the middle of the trail.

When the grizzly saw her, his wicked little dark eyes glowed suddenly red, and he came up with a lumbering rush. With his gigantic, furry bulk, it looked as if he must instantly annihilate the slim, light creature that opposed him. It was a dreadful place to give battle, on that straight shelf of rock overhanging a sheer drop of perhaps a thousand feet. But scorn and rage together blinded the sagacity of the bear. With a grunt he charged.

Not until he was within ten feet of her did the crouching puma stir. Then she shot into the air, as if hurled up by the release of a mighty spring. Quick as a flash the grizzly shrank backward upon his haunches and swept up a huge black paw to parry the assault. But he was not quite quick enough. The puma's spring over-reached his guard. She landed fairly upon his back, facing his tail ; but in the fraction of a second she had whirled about and was tearing at his throat with teeth and claws, while the terrible talons of her hinder paws ripped at his flanks.

With a roar of agony and amazement the grizzly struggled to shake her off, clutching and striking at her with paws that at one blow could smash in the skull of the most powerful bull. But he could not reach her. Then he reared up, and threw himself backwards against the face of the rock, striving to crush her under his enormous weight. And in this he almost succeeded. Just in time, she writhed around and outward, but not quite far enough, for one paw was caught and ground to a pulp. But at the next instant,



"It looked as if he must instantly annihilate the slim, light creature that opposed him."

thrust back from the rock by his own effort, the bear toppled outward over the brink of the shelf. Grappling madly to save himself, he caught only the bowed loins of the puma, who now sank her teeth once more into his throat, while her rending claws seemed to tear him everywhere at once. He crushed her in his grip; and in a dreadful ball of screeching, roaring, biting, mangling rage the two plunged downward into the dim abyss. Once, still locked in the death-grip, they struck upon a jutting rock and bounded far out into space. Then, as the ball rolled over in falling, it came apart; and separated now, though still very close together, the two bodies fell sprawlingly, and vanished into the blue-shadowed deeps which the dawn had not yet reached.

Upon this sudden and terrible ending of the fight appeared a bearded frontiersman, who had been trailing the grizzly for half an hour and waiting for light enough to secure a sure shot. With something like awe in his face he came, and knelt down with hands gripping cautiously, and peered over the dreadful brink. "Gee! But that there cat was game!" he muttered, drawing back and sweeping a comprehensive gaze across the stupendous landscape, as if challenging denial of his statement. Obviously the silences were of the same opinion, for there came no suggestion of dissent. Carefully he rose to his feet and pressed on towards the cave.

Without hesitation he entered, for he knew that the puma's mate some weeks before had been shot, far down in the valley. He found the kittens asleep and began to fondle them. At his touch, and the smell of him, they awoke, spitting and clawing with all their mother's courage. Young as they were, their claws drew blood abundantly. "Gritty little devils!" growled the man good-naturedly, snatching back his hand and wiping the blood on his trouser-leg. Then he took off his coat, threw it over the troublesome youngsters, rolled them in it securely, so that not one protesting claw could get out, and started back to the camp with the grumbling and uneasy bundle in his arms.

Three months later, the two puma cubs, sleek, fat, full of gaiety as two kittens of like age, and convinced by this time that man was the source and origin of all good things, were sold to a travelling collector. One, the female, was sent down to a zoological garden on the Pacific coast. The other, the male, much the larger and at the same time the more even-tempered and amenable to teaching, found its way to the cages of an animal-trainer in the east.

II.

"KING'S kind of ugly to-night, seems to me; better keep yer eyes peeled!" said Andy Hansen, the assistant trainer, the big, yellow-haired Swede who knew not fear. Neither did he know impatience or irritability; and so all the animals, as a rule, were on their good behaviour under his calm, masterful, blue eye. Yet he was tactful with the beasts, and given to humouring their moods as far as convenient without ever letting them guess it.

"Oh, you go chase yourself, Andy!" replied Signor Tomaso, the trainer, with a strong New England accent. "If I got to look out for King, I'd better quit the business. Don't you go trying to make trouble between friends, Andy."

"Of course, Bill, I know he'd never try to maul *you*," explained Hansen seriously, determined that he should not be misunderstood in the smallest particular. "But he's acting curious. Look out he don't get into a scrap with some of the other animals."

"I reckon I kin keep 'em all straight," answered the trainer dryly, as he turned away to get ready for the great performance which the audience, dimly heard beyond the canvas walls, was breathlessly awaiting.

The trainer's name was William Sparks, and his birthplace Big Chebeague, Maine; but his lean, swarthy face and piercing, green-brown eyes, combined with the craving of his audiences for a touch of the romantic, had led him to adopt the more sonorous pseudonym of "Signor Tomaso." He maintained that if he went under his own name, nobody would ever believe that what he did could be anything wonderful. Except for this trifling matter of the name, there was no fake about Signor Tomaso. He was a brilliant animal-trainer, as unacquainted with fear as the Swede, and as dominant of eye, and of immeasurably greater experience. But as he was, at the same time, more emotional, more temperamental than his phlegmatic assistant, his control was sometimes less steady, and now and again he would have to assert his authority with violence. He was keenly alive to the varying personalities of his beasts, naturally, and hence had favourites among them. His especial favourite, who heartily reciprocated the attachment, was the great puma, King, the most intelligent and amiable of all the wild animals that had ever come under his training-whip.

As Hansen's success with the animals, during the few months of his experience as assistant, had been altogether phenomenal, his chief felt a qualm of pique upon being warned against the big puma. He had too just an appreciation of Hansen's judgment, however, quite to disregard the warning, and he turned it over curiously in his mind as he went to his dressing-room. Emerging a few minutes later in the black-and-white of faultless evening dress, without a speck on his varnished shoes, he moved down along the front of the cages, addressing to the occupant of each, as he passed, a sharp, authoritative word which brought it to attention.

With the strange, savage smell of the cages in his nostrils, that bitter, acrid pungency to which his senses never grew blunted, a new spirit of understanding was wont to enter Tomaso's brain. He would feel a sudden kinship with the wild creatures, such a direct and instant comprehension as almost justified his fancy that in some previous existence he had himself been a wild man of the jungle and spoken in their tongue. As he looked keenly into each cage he knew that the animal whose eyes for that moment met his was in untroubled mood. This, till he came to the cage containing the latest addition to his troupe, a large cinnamon bear, which was rocking restlessly to and fro and grumbling to itself. The bear was one which had been long in captivity and well trained, and Tomaso had found him docile, and clever enough to be admitted at once to the performing troupe. But to-night the beast's eyes were red with some ill-humour. Twice the trainer spoke to him before he heeded; but then he assumed instantly an air of mildest subservience.

"Ah, ha! old sport! So it's you that's got a grouch on to-night; I'll keep an eye on you!" he muttered to himself. He snapped his heavy whip once, and the bear obediently sat upon its haunches, its great paws hanging meekly. Tomaso looked it sharply in the eye. "Don't forget, now, and get funny!" he admonished. Then he returned to the first cage, which contained the puma, and went up close to the bars. The great cat came and rubbed against him, purring harshly.

"There ain't nothing the matter with *you*, boy, I reckon," said Tomaso, scratching him affectionately behind the ears. "Andy must have wheels in his head if he thinks I've got to keep my eyes peeled on *your* account."

Out beyond the iron-grilled passage, beyond the lighted canvas walls, the sharp, metallic noises of the workmen setting up the great performing-cage came to a stop. There was a burst of music from the orchestra. That, too, ceased. The restless hum of the unseen masses around the arena died away into an expectant hush. It was time to go on. At the further end of the passage, by the closed door leading to the performing-cage, Hansen appeared. Tomaso opened the puma's cage. King dropped out with a soft thud of his great paws, and padded swiftly down the passage, his master following. Hansen slid wide the door, admitting a glare of light, a vast, intense rustle of excitement; and King marched majestically out into it, eyeing calmly the tier on climbing tier of eager faces. It was his customary privilege, this, to make the entrance alone, a good half minute ahead of the rest of the troupe; and he seemed to value it. Half way around the big cage he walked, then mounted his pedestal, sat up very straight, and stared blandly at the audience. A salvo of clapping ran smartly around the tiers—King's usual tribute, which he had so learned to expect that any failure of it would have dispirited him for the whole performance.

Signor Tomaso had taken his stand, whip in hand, just inside the cage, with Hansen opposite him, to see that the animals, on entry, went each straight to his own bench or pedestal. Any mistake in this connection was sure to lead to trouble, each beast being almost childishly jealous of its rights. Inside the long passage an attendant was opening one cage after another; and in a second more the animals began to appear in procession, filing out between the immaculate Signor and the roughly clad Swede. First came a majestic white Angora goat, carrying high his horned and bearded head, and stepping most daintily upon slim, black hoofs. Close behind, and looking just ready to pounce upon him but for dread of the Signor's eye, came slinking stealthily a spotted black-and-yellow leopard, ears back and tail twitching. He seemed ripe for mischief, as he climbed reluctantly on to his pedestal beside the goat; but he knew better than even to bare a claw. And as for the white goat, with his big, golden eyes superciliously half-closed, he ignored his dangerous neighbour completely, while his jaws chewed nonchalantly on a bit of brown shoelace which he had picked up in the passage.

Close behind the leopard came a bored-looking lion, who marched with listless dignity straight to his place. Then another lion, who paused in the doorway and looked out doubtfully, blinking with distaste at the strong light. Tomaso spoke sharply, like the snap of his whip, whereupon the lion ran forward in haste.

The lion was followed by a running wolf, who had shown his teeth savagely when the lion, for a moment, trespassed upon his pedestal. This beast was intensely interested in the audience, and, as soon as he was in his place, turned his head and glared with green, narrowed eyes at the nearest spectators, as if trying to stare them out of countenance. After the wolf came a beautiful Bengal tiger, its black-and-golden stripes shining as if they had been oiled. He glided straight to his stand, sniffed at it superciliously, and then lay down before it. The whip snapped sharply three times, but the tiger only shut his eyes tight. The audience grew hushed. Tomaso ran forward, seized the beast by the back of the neck, and shook him roughly. Whereupon the tiger half rose, opened his great red mouth like a cavern, and roared in his master's face. The audience thrilled from corner to corner, and a few cries came from frightened women.

The trainer paused for an instant, to give full effect to the situation. Then, stooping suddenly, he lifted the tiger's hindquarters and deposited them firmly on the pedestal, and left him in that awkward position.

"There," he said in a loud voice, "that's all the help you'll get from me!"

The audience roared with instant and delighted appreciation. The tiger gathered up the rest of himself upon his pedestal, wiped his face with his paw, like a cat, and settled down complacently with a pleased assurance that he had done the trick well.

At this moment the attention of the audience was drawn to the entrance, where there seemed to be some hitch. Tomaso snapped his whip sharply, and shouted savage orders, but nothing came forth. Then the big Swede, with an agitated air, snatched up the trainer's pitchfork, which stood close at hand in case of emergency, made swift passes at the empty doorway, and jumped back. The audience was lifted fairly to its feet with excitement. What monster could it be that was giving so much trouble? The next moment, while Tomaso's whip hissed in vicious circles over his head, a plump little drab-coloured pug dog marched slowly out upon the stage, its head held arrogantly aloft. Volleys of laughter crackled around the arena, and the delighted spectators settled, tittering, back into their seats.

The pug glanced searchingly around the cage, then selecting the biggest of the lions as a worthy antagonist, flew at his pedestal, barking furious challenge. The lion glanced down at him, looked bored at the noise, and yawned. Apparently disappointed, the pug turned away and sought another adversary. He saw King's big tail hanging down beside his pedestal. Flinging himself upon it, he began to worry it as if it were a rat. The next moment the tail threshed vigorously, and the pug went rolling end over end across the stage.

Picking himself up and shaking the sawdust from his coat, the pug growled savagely and curled his little tail into a tighter screw. Bristling with wrath, he tiptoed menacingly back toward the puma's pedestal, determined to wipe out the indignity. This time his challenge was accepted. Tomaso's whip snapped, but the audience was too intent to hear it. The great puma slipped down from his pedestal, ran forward a few steps, and crouched.

With a shrill snarl the pug rushed in. At the same instant the puma sprang, making a splendid, tawny curve through the air, and alighted ten feet behind his antagonist's tail. There he wheeled like lightning and crouched. But the pug, enraged at being baulked of his vengeance, had also wheeled, and charged again in the same half second. In the next, he had the puma by the throat. With a dreadful screech the great beast rolled over on his side and stiffened out his legs. The pug drew off, eyed him critically to make sure that he was quite dead, then ran, barking shrill triumph, to take possession of the victim's place. Then the whip cracked once more. Whereupon the puma got up, trotted back to his pedestal, mounted it, and tucked the pug protectingly away between his great forepaws.

The applause had not quite died away when a towering, sandy-brown bulk appeared in the entrance to the cage. Erect upon its hind-legs, and with a musket on its shoulder, it marched ponderously and slowly around the circle, eyeing each of the sitting beasts—except the wolf—suspiciously as it passed. The watchful eyes of both Signor Tomaso and Hansen noted that it gave wider berth to the puma than to any of the others, and also that the puma's ears, at the moment, were ominously flattened. Instantly the

long whip snapped its terse admonition to good manners. Nothing happened, except that the pug, from between the puma's legs, barked insolently. The sandy-brown bulk reached its allotted pedestal—which was quite absurdly too small for it to mount—dropped the musket with a clatter, fell upon all fours with a loud *whoof* of relief, and relapsed into a bear.

The stage now set to his satisfaction, Signor Tomaso advanced to the centre of it. He snapped his whip, and uttered a sharp cry which the audience doubtless took for purest Italian. Immediately the animals all descended from their pedestals, and circled solemnly around him in a series of more or less intricate evolutions, all except the bear, who, not having yet been initiated into this beast quadrille, kept his place and looked scornful. At another signal the evolutions ceased, and all the beasts, except one of the lions, hurried back to their places. The lion, with the bashful air of a boy who gets up to "speak his piece" at a school examination, lingered in the middle of the stage. A rope was brought. The Swede took one end of it, the attendant who had brought it took the other, and between them they began to swing it, very slowly, as a great skipping-rope. At an energetic command from Signor Tomaso the lion slipped into the swinging circle, and began to skip in a ponderous and shamefaced fashion. The house thundered applause. For perhaps half a minute the strange performance continued, the whip snapping rhythmically with every descent of the rope. Then all at once, as if he simply could not endure it for another second, the lion bolted, head down, clambered upon his pedestal, and shut his eyes hard as if expecting a whipping. But as nothing happened, except a roar of laughter from the seats, he opened them again and glanced from side to side complacently, as if to say: "Didn't I get out of that neatly?"

After this, four of the red-and-yellow uniformed attendants ran in, each carrying a large hoop. They stationed themselves at equal distances around the circumference of the cage, holding the hoops out before them at a height of about four feet from the ground. At the command of Tomaso, the animals all formed in procession—though not without much cracking of the whip and vehement command—and went leaping one after the other through the hoops—all except the pug, who tried in vain to jump so high, and the bear, who, not knowing how to jump at all, simply marched around and pretended not to see that the hoops were there. Then four other hoops, covered with white paper, were brought in, and head first through them the puma led the way. When it came to the bear's turn, the whip cracked a special signal. Whereupon, instead of ignoring the hoop as he had done before, he stuck his head through it and marched off with it hanging on his neck. All four hoops he gathered up in this way, and, retiring with them to his place, stood shuffling restlessly and grunting with impatience until he was relieved of the awkward burden.

A moment later four more hoops were handed to the attendants. They looked like the first lot; but the attendants took them with hooked handles of iron and held them out at arm's length. Touched with a match, they burst instantly into leaping yellow flames; whereupon all the beasts, except King, stirred uneasily on their pedestals. The whip snapped with emphasis; and all the beasts—except King, who sat eyeing the flames tranquilly, and the bear, who whined his disapproval, but knew that he was not expected to take part in this act—formed again in procession, and ran at the flaming hoops as if to jump through them as before. But each, on arriving at a hoop, crouched flat and scurried under it like a frightened cat—except the white goat, which pranced aside and capered past derisively. Pretending to be much disappointed in them, Signor Tomaso ordered them all back to their places, and, folding his arms, stood with his head lowered as if wondering what to do about it. Upon this, King descended proudly from his pedestal and approached the blazing terrors. With easiest grace and nonchalance he lifted his lithe body, and went bounding lightly through the hoops, one after the other. The audience stormed its applause. Twice around this terrifying circuit he went, as indifferent to the writhing flames as if they had been so much grass waving in the wind. Then he stopped abruptly, turned his head, and looked at Tomaso in expectation. The latter came up, fondled his ears, and assured him that he had done wonders. Then King returned to his place, elation bristling in his whiskers.

While the flaming hoops were being rushed from the ring and the audience was settling down again to the quiet of unlimited expectation, a particularly elaborate act was being prepared. A massive wooden stand, with shelves and seats at various heights, was brought in. Signor Tomaso, coiling the lash

of his whip and holding the heavy handle, with its loaded butt, as a sceptre, took his place on a somewhat raised seat at the centre of the frame. Hansen, with his pitchfork in one hand and a whip like Tomaso's in the other, drew nearer; and the audience, with a thrill, realised that something more than ordinarily dangerous was on the cards. The tiger came and stretched itself at full length before Tomaso, who at once appropriated him as a footstool. The bear and the biggest of the lions posted themselves on either side of their master, rearing up like the armorial supporters of some illustrious escutcheon, and resting their mighty fore-paws apparently on their master's shoulders, though in reality on two narrow little shelves placed there for the purpose. Another lion came and laid his huge head on Tomaso's knees, as if doing obeisance. By this time all the other animals were prowling about the stand, peering this way and that, as if trying to remember their places; and the big Swede was cracking his whip briskly, with curt, deep-toned commands, to sharpen up their memories. Only King seemed quite clear as to what he had to do—which was to lay his tawny body along the shelf immediately over the heads of the lion and the bear; but as he mounted the stand from the rear his ears went back and he showed a curious reluctance to fulfil his part. Hansen's keen eyes noted this at once, and his whip snapped emphatically in the air just above the great puma's nose. Still King hesitated. The lion paid no attention whatever, but the bear glanced up with reddening eyes and a surly wagging of his head. It was all a slight matter, too slight to catch the eye or the uncomprehending thoughts of the audience. But a grave, well-dressed man, with copper-coloured face, high cheek-bones and straight, coal-black hair, who sat close to the front, turned to a companion and said—

"Those men are good trainers, but they don't know everything about pumas. *We* know that there is a hereditary feud between the pumas and the bears, and that when they come together, there's apt to be trouble."

The speaker was a full-blooded Sioux, but a graduate of one of the big eastern universities. He leaned forward with a curious fire in his deep-set, piercing eyes, as King, unwillingly obeying the mandates of the whip, dropped down and stretched out upon his shelf, his nervous forepaws not more than a foot above the bear's head. His nostrils were twitching as if they smelled something unutterably distasteful, and his thick tail looked twice its usual size. The Sioux, who, alone of all present, understood these signs, laid an involuntary hand of warning upon his companion's knee.

Just what positions the other animals were about to take will never be known. King's sinews tightened. "Ha-ow!" grunted the Sioux, reverting in his excitement to his ancient utterance. There was a lightning sweep of King's paw, a shout from Hansen, a *wah* of surprise and pain from the bear. King leaped back to the top of the stand to avoid the expected counter-stroke. But not against him did the bear's rage turn. The maddened beast seemed to conclude that his master had betrayed him. With a roar he struck at Tomaso with the full force of his terrible forearm. Tomaso was in the very act of leaping forward from his seat, when the blow caught him, full on the shoulder, shattering the bones, ripping the whole side out of his coat, and hurling him senseless to the floor.

The change in the scene was instantaneous and appalling. Most of the animals, startled, and dreading immediate punishment, darted for their pedestals—*any* pedestals that they found within reach—and fought savagely for the possession of the first they came to. The bear fell furiously upon the body of Tomaso. Cries and shrieks arose from the spectators. Hansen rushed to the rescue, his fork clutched in both hands. Attendants, armed with forks or iron bars, seemed to spring up from nowhere. But before anyone could reach the spot, an appalling screech tore across the uproar, and King's yellow body, launched from the top of the stand, fell like a thunderbolt upon the bear's back.

The shock rolled the bear clean over. While he was clawing about wildly, in the effort to grapple with his assailant, Hansen dragged aside the still unconscious Tomaso, and two attendants carried him hurriedly from the stage.

Audience and stage alike were now in a sort of frenzy. Animals were fighting here and there in tangled groups; but for the moment all eyes were riveted on the deadly struggle which occupied the centre of the stage.

For all that he had less than a quarter the weight and nothing like a quarter the bulk of his gigantic adversary, the puma, through the advantage of his attack, was having much the best of the fight. Hansen had no time for sentiment, no time to concern himself as to whether his chief was dead or alive. His



"Latent instincts began to spring into life, and he lapsed into the movements and customs of the wild puma."

business was to save valuable property by preventing the beasts from destroying each other. It mattered not to him, now, that King had come so effectively to Tomaso's rescue. Prodding him mercilessly with his fork, and raining savage blows upon his head, he strove, in a cold rage, to drive him off; but in vain. But other keepers, meanwhile, had run in with ropes and iron bars. A few moments more and both combatants were securely lassoed. Then they were torn apart by main force, streaming with blood. Blinded by blankets thrown over their heads, and hammered into something like subjection, they were dragged off at a rush and slammed unceremoniously into their dens. With them out of the way it was a quick matter to dispose of the other fights, though not till after the white goat had been killed to satisfy that ancient grudge of the leopards, and the wolf had been cruelly mauled for having refused to give up his pedestal to one of the excited lions. Then word went round among the spectators that Tomaso was not dead—that, though badly injured, he would recover; and straightway they calmed down, with a complacent sense of having got the value of their money. The great cage was taken apart and carried off. The stage was speedily transformed. And two trick comedians, with slippers that flapped a foot beyond their toes, undertook to wipe out the memory of what had happened.

III.

THE show was touring the larger towns of the north-west. On the following day it started, leaving Tomaso behind in hospital, with a shattered shoulder and bitter wrath in his heart. At the next town, Hansen took Tomaso's place, but, for two reasons, with a sadly maimed performance. He had not yet acquired sufficient control of the animals to dare all Tomaso's acts; and the troupe was lacking some of its most important performers. The proud white goat was dead. The bear, the wolf, and one of the lions were laid up with their wounds. And as for the great puma, though *he* had come off with comparatively little hurt, his temper had apparently been quite transformed. Hansen could do nothing with him. Whether it was that he was sick for Tomaso, whom he adored, or that he stewed in a black rage over the blows and pitchforkings, hitherto unknown to him, no one could surely say. He would do nothing but crouch, brooding, sullen and dangerous, at the back of his cage. Hansen noted the green light flickering fitfully across his pale, wide eyes, and prudently refrained from pressing matters.

He was right. For, as a matter of fact, it was against the big Swede exclusively, and not against man in general, that King was nursing his grudge. In a dim way it had got into his brain that Hansen had taken sides with the bear against him and Tomaso, and he thirsted for vengeance. At the same time, he felt that Tomaso had deserted him. Day by day, as he brooded, the desire for escape—a desire which he had never known before—grew in his heart. Vaguely, perhaps, he dreamed that he would go and find Tomaso. At any rate, he would go—somewhere, anywhere, away from this world which had turned unfriendly to him. When this feeling grew dominant, he would rise suddenly and go prowling swiftly up and down behind the bars of his cage like a wild creature just caught.

Curiously enough—for it is seldom indeed that Fate responds to the longing of such exiles from the wild—his opportunity came. Late at night the show reached a little town among the foothills. The train had been delayed for hours. The night was dark. Everything was in confusion, and all nerves on edge. The short road from the station to the field where the tents were to be set up was in bad repair, or had never been really a road. It ran along the edge of a steep gully. In the darkness one wheel of the van containing King's cage dropped to the hub into a yawning rut. Under the violence of the jolt a section of the edge of the bank gave way and crashed down to the bottom of the gully, dragging with it the struggling and screaming horses. The cage roof was completely smashed in.

To King's eyes the darkness was but a twilight, pleasant and convenient. He saw an opening big enough to squeeze through; and beyond it, beyond the wild shouting and the flares of swung lanterns, a thick wood dark beneath the paler sky. Before anyone could get down to the wreck, he was out and free and away. Crouching with belly to the earth, he ran noiselessly, and gained the woods before anyone knew he had escaped. Straight on he ran, watchful but swift, heading for the places where the silence lay heaviest. Within five minutes Hansen had half the men of the show, with ropes, forks, and lanterns, hot on the trail. Within fifteen minutes, half the male population of the town was engaged in an enthusiastic puma hunt. But King was already far away, and making progress that would have been

impossible to an ordinary wild puma. His life among men had taught him nothing about trees, so he had no unfortunate instinct to climb one and hide among the branches to see what his pursuers would be up to. His idea of getting away—and, perhaps, of finding his vanished master—was to keep right on. And this he did, though of course not at top speed, the pumas not being a race of long-winded runners like the wolves. In an hour or two he reached a rocky and precipitous ridge, quite impassible to men except by day. This he scaled with ease, and at the top, in the high solitude, felt safe enough to rest a little while. Then he made his way down the long, ragged western slopes, and at daybreak came into a wild valley of woods and brooks.

By this time King was hungry. But game was plentiful. After two or three humiliating failures with rabbits—owing to his inexperience in stalking anything more elusive than a joint of dead mutton, he caught a fat woodchuck, and felt his self-respect return. Here he might have been tempted to halt, although, to be sure, he saw no sign of Tomaso, but beyond the valley, still westward, he saw mountains, which drew him strangely. In particular, one uplifted peak, silver and sapphire as the clear day, and soaring supreme over the jumble of lesser summits, attracted him. He knew now that that was where he was going, and thither he pressed on with singleness of purpose, delaying only when absolutely necessary, to hunt or to sleep. The cage, the stage, the whip, Hansen, the bear, even the proud excitement of the flaming hoops, were swiftly fading to dimness in his mind, overwhelmed by the inrush of new, wonderful impressions. At last, reaching the lower, granite-ribbed flanks of old White Face itself, he began to feel curiously content, and no longer under the imperative need of haste.

Here it was good hunting. Yet, though well satisfied, he made no effort to find himself a lair to serve as headquarters, but kept gradually working his way onward up the mountain. The higher he went, the more content he grew, till even his craving for his master was forgotten. Latent instincts began to spring into life, and he lapsed into the movements and customs of the wild puma. Only when he came upon a long, massive footprint in the damp earth by a spring, or a wisp of pungent-smelling fur on the rubbed and clawed bark of a tree, memory would rush back upon him fiercely. His ears would flatten down, his eyes would gleam green, his tail would twitch, and crouching to earth he would glare into every near-by thicket for a sight of his mortal foe. He had not yet learnt to discriminate between an old scent and a new.

About this time a hunter from the East, who had his camp a little further down the valley, was climbing White Face on the trail of a large grizzly. He was lithe of frame, with a lean, dark, eager face, and he followed the perilous trail with a lack of prudence which showed a very inadequate appreciation of grizzlies. The trail ran along a narrow ledge cresting an abrupt but bushy steep. At the foot of the steep, crouched along a massive branch and watching for game of some sort to pass by, lay the big puma. Attracted by a noise above his head, he glanced up and saw the hunter. It was certainly not Tomaso, but it looked like him; and the puma's piercing eyes grew almost benevolent. He had no ill-feeling to any man but the Swede.

Other ears than those of the puma had heard the unwary hunter's footsteps. The grizzly had caught them and stopped to listen. Yes, he was being followed! In a rage he wheeled about and ran back noiselessly to see who it was that could dare such presumption. Turning a shoulder of rock, he came face to face with the hunter, and at once, with a deep, throaty grunt, he charged.

The hunter had not even time to get his heavy rifle to his shoulder. He fired once, point blank, from the hip. The shot took effect somewhere, but in no vital spot evidently, for it failed to check, even for one second, that terrific charge. To meet the charge was to be blasted out of being instantly. There was but one way open. The hunter sprang straight out from the ledge with a lightning vision of thick, soft-looking bushes far below him. The slope was steep, but by no means perpendicular, and he struck in a thicket which broke the full shock of the fall. His rifle flew far out of his hands. He rebounded, clutching at the bushes; he could not check himself. Rolling over and over, his eyes and mouth choked with dust and leaves, he bumped on down the slope, and brought up at last, dazed but conscious, in a swampy hole under the roots of a huge, overleaning tree.

Striving to clear his eyes and mouth, his first consciousness was that he could not lift his left arm. The next, that he seemed to have jumped from the frying-pan into the fire. His jaws set themselves desperately as he drew the long hunting-knife from his

belt and struggled up to one knee, resolved at least to make his last fight a good one. Almost over his head, on a limb not six feet distant, crouched, ready to spring, the biggest puma he had ever seen. At this new confronting of doom his brain cleared, and his sinews seemed to stretch with fresh courage. It was hopeless, of course, as he knew, but his heart refused to recognise the fact. Then he noted with wonder that not at him at all was the puma looking, but far over his head. He followed that look, and again his heart sank, this time quite beyond the reach of hope. There was the grizzly coming down the slope headlong, foam slavering from his red jaws.

Bewildered, and feeling like a rat in a hole, the hunter tried to slip around the base of the tree, desperately hoping to gain some post of vantage whence to get home at least two or three good blows before the end. But the moment he moved, the grizzly fairly hurled himself downwards. The hunter jumped aside and wheeled, with his knife lifted, his disabled left arm against the tree trunk. But in that same instant, a miracle! Noiselessly the puma's tawny length shot out overhead and fell upon the bear in the very mid-rush of the charge.

At once it seemed as if some cataclysmic upheaval were in progress. The air, as it were, went mad with screeches, yells, snarls, and enormous thick gruntings. The bushes went down on every side. Now the bear was on top, now the puma. They writhed over and over, and for some seconds the hunter stared with stupefaction. Then he recovered his wits. He saw that the puma, for some inexplicable reason, had come to his help. But he saw, also, that the gigantic grizzly must win. Instead of slipping off and leaving his ally to destruction, he ran up, waited a moment for the perfect opportunity, and drove his knife to the hilt into the very centre of the back of the bear's neck, just where it joined the skull. Then he sprang aside.

Strangely the noise died away. The huge bulk of the grizzly sank slowly into a heap, the puma still raking it with the eviscerating weapons of his hinder claws. A moment more and he seemed to realise that he had achieved a sudden triumph. Bleeding, hideously mangled, but still, apparently, full of fighting vigour, he disengaged himself from the unresisting mass and looked around him proudly. His wild eyes met those of the hunter, and the hunter had an anxious moment. But the great beast looked away again at once, and seemed, in fact, to forget all about the man's existence. He lay down and commenced licking assiduously at his wounds. Filled with astonishment, and just now beginning to realise the anguish in his broken arm, the hunter stole discreetly away.

After an hour or two the puma got up, rather feebly, passed the body of his slain foe without a glance, and clambered up the slope to the ledge. He wanted a place of refuge now, a retreat that would be safe and cool and dark. Up and up he followed the winding of that narrow trail, and came out at last upon a rocky platform before a black-mouthed cave. He knew well enough that he had killed the owner of the cave, so he entered without hesitation.

Here, for two days, he lay in concealment, licking his wounds. He had no desire to eat; but two or three times, because the wounds fevered him, he came forth and descended the trail a little way to where he had seen a cold spring bubbling from the rocks. His clean blood, in that high, clean air, quickly set itself to the healing of the hurts, and strength flowed back swiftly into his torn sinews. At dawn of the third day he felt himself suddenly hungry, and realising that he must seek some small game even though not yet ready for any difficult hunting, he crept forth, just as the first thin glory of rose light came washing into the cave. But before he started down the trail, he paused, and stood staring, with some dim half-memory, out across the transparent, hollow spaces, the jumbled hilltops, misty, grey-green forests, and steel bright loops of water to which he had at last come home.

THE VICAR'S VISITOR.

By FLORENCE WARDEN.

IT was on a warm but dull June evening that two ladies sat together in the dining-room of a Kentish vicarage, the one busy with a basket of stockings to be darned, the other with the weekly paper spread out before her on the table.

The elder of the two ladies, a gentle-looking spinster of about fifty years of age, was the sister of the Rev. George Kenley, the Vicar of Scarfield, and aunt, therefore, to his only child, Mary, now a charming and pretty girl of twenty.

The Vicar had lost his wife many years ago, and his sister had been housekeeper to him and mother to his daughter ever since.

Mary was reading out the various items of interest aloud to her aunt. "'A boy named Jones was playing with a loaded gun on Friday last, when it went off, and the bullet with which it was loaded entered the head of his little sister, who died instantaneously.'"

"It only shows," said Miss Kenley, looking up with a grave frown, "how right I am in saying that *all* guns, at *all* times, should be looked upon as loaded, even if you have just seen the charge drawn with your own eyes."

Mary nodded.

"This sounds rather creepy, Aunt Myra, doesn't it? 'Yesterday a lunatic escaped from a private asylum and has not yet been recaptured. There is considerable alarm amongst the authorities about the matter, as the unfortunate man is known to have homicidal tendencies, and has tried on two occasions to kill people by attacking them from behind.'"

Her aunt looked up with an exclamation. Mary went on reading—

"'He is a man of a little more than the middle height, of gentlemanly appearance and address, and talks well and with interest on such subjects as literature and art.'"

"Good gracious!" cried Miss Kenley. "It must be that poor man the Ropers were telling me about."

Mary shivered.

"How horrid for him to be about! I hope he won't wander in this direction."

Miss Kenley looked uneasy.

"His friends, the Ropers, live near here," she said dubiously. "And this place is so lonely! And I've got to go to the church this evening and do the flowers for to-morrow."

"Let me go, Aunt Myra; I'm not a bit afraid, really."

"Certainly not. I was only wishing that Millie were back, so that she might go with me."

Millie was the cook, a robust and laughter-loving Kentish lass, whose spirit and muscle could be relied on.

"She won't be back much before eight. Take Perrin."

This was the parlourmaid, a ladylike young person from London, with "nerves." The suggestion was taken as a jest by Miss Kenley.

"Imagine how much assistance Perrin would give in an emergency of that sort! No. I shall be on my bicycle, and—and, of course, there's no danger really. I don't suppose the Ropers are the poor man's only friends."

Whether Miss Kenley was really nervous or not, Mary could not tell. Certainly she gave no sign of it as she went off on her bicycle, with the big basket of flowers strapped on behind.

Mary, who had come as far as the garden gate to see her aunt on her way, watched her down the high-road until she became a speck in the distance and disappeared at the bend.

The vicarage, which was a quarter of a mile from the church, stood by itself at an angle of the road. It was a plain, square, flint-faced building, with a large garden behind and a small one in front, and it was built facing the road to the church and the village.

Mary felt just a little uneasy and timid as she turned to go indoors, and realised that a madman, with homicidal tendencies, might be more likely to turn his attention to the occupants of a lonely house than to people

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walking or bicycling along the high-road. She was not exactly nervous, but she wished she had not heard of this escaped lunatic who was a friend of the Ropers.

She had reached the open French window of the dining-room, by which she had come out, when her attention was attracted by the sound of rapid footsteps on the road which ran at right angles to that which led to the church. Instinctively she paused to ascertain whose the footsteps were, and the next moment she saw a face peering at her over the trimly clipped hedge which bordered the garden.

A spasm of horror ran through her, and, with a low cry, she tried to get into the dining-room and to shut the window behind her.

For the first glance she cast at the flushed face, glaring eyes, open mouth, and disordered hair of the hatless stranger, convinced her that she was face to face with the madman himself.

Panting, staring at her stupidly, and speaking in a hoarse, unnatural voice which made her shiver, the man muttered some incoherent words which sounded like a request of some sort.

Ashamed of her first fright, and thinking it better to appear at least cool and collected, however deceptive such a demeanour might be, Mary turned a smiling face towards the stranger, who had by this time opened the garden gate, and said, as she pushed the French window—

"The Vicar is away."

She had no idea what it was that he had tried to ask, but she thought this seemed the right sort of thing to say. Then she tried to enter without undue haste.

But however leisurely her movements might be, those of the stranger were nothing of the kind. She had scarcely set foot inside the dining-room, and turned to close the window, when, to her horror, she found the madman upon her. He had sprung across the little lawn in front of the vicarage and forced his way into the dining-room close to her heels.

"I—I beg your pardon. I—I must apologise for this intrusion," stammered the man, as he tried to smile reassuringly, but only succeeded in betraying still more plainly than before the state of nervous tension from which he was suffering.

As he spoke, he closed the window, and then, turning to Mary, bowed, still panting and incoherent, and stammered out—

"I hope I haven't frightened you. But the fact is—pray don't be alarmed—I'm more sorry than I can say for being forced to such an unconventional act. But there are some people following me, er—er—who——"

Mary, who was so much alarmed that she was for the moment paralysed and incapable of action, understood at once by this that the asylum authorities were in pursuit of the man, and she resolved to go out to meet them and to lead them to him. But there were difficulties in the way. The dining-room was a large room; on one side was the fireplace, and on the other the door. In retreating from the window, she had gone towards the fireplace, and there was a broad space to traverse before she could reach the door. In doing so she would have to turn her back to the madman, and this she was determined not to do.

She had an idea that if she could only keep him talking until she should hear the sound of footsteps outside, he would probably turn to the window to see who was coming, and so give her an opportunity of making a dash for the door.

She therefore did her best to maintain an appearance of calmness, and, controlling her voice very imperfectly, said—

"You are on your way to the village?"

"Yes."

As he spoke, she saw him turn anxiously, as if listening for some expected and dreaded sound outside.

All this time he was standing just within the loosely hanging lace curtains, without advancing far into the room. She now noticed that his right hand was held behind him, and she had an uncomfortable curiosity to know why.

He turned again to her with great abruptness—

"Is there a police-station there?"

Before she could answer, he had once more wheeled round to look out of the window, and, to her intense horror, she saw, against the light, that what he held behind his back in his right hand was a long, open knife. Frozen with terror, she forgot to reply. For a few moments he stood listening, and she watched him with fascinated eyes. Then, recovering herself, she saw that this might be a good opportunity for her to make her escape, and she had taken two or three steps in the direction of the door when the stranger, once more turning towards her, ran out round the table, and speaking in a confused way, said—

"Pray don't let me think I have driven



"'There's a madman in the basement.'"

you out of the room. I really don't know how to apologise for this very unceremonious behaviour. But the fact is, I have just escaped from a most unpleasant situation, and if I had been caught up by the person who was pursuing me at the time I was happy enough to see you looking out of your garden, I should have had to go through all the horror of it again."

Poor Mary listened with the blood running cold in her veins. But putting strong constraint upon herself, and understanding how necessary it was that she should keep all her wits about her, she contrived to remain outwardly tranquil, except for certain quiverings of her hands and lips, as she smiled, and said she was very glad if she had been the means of saving him from such a disagreeable meeting.

"Won't you sit down?" she said. "My aunt will be in before long, and she will be able to tell you anything you want to know about the—the village."

He hesitated, and then availed himself of her invitation, and sat down on a chair which was half way between the window and the door. Mary felt sure that this position was chosen by him in order to prevent her escape from the room in either direction. She saw that his right hand was again concealed behind him, and the knowledge that he was holding the weapon ready for the moment when she should turn her back to him braced her nerves and kept her at keen tension, while she did her best to divert his attention by small talk, which, in the circumstances, was not very easy to think of.

And while she talked and watched him, she noted that, but for the wild look in his dark eyes and his flushed and heated condition, he would have been remarkably handsome, for he was a young man of good figure and easy carriage, with well-cut, refined features and curly brown hair. His voice, though rather hoarse, was pleasant and musical, and his manner, though nervous, was courteous, and, but for her terrors, would have been winning.

She almost jumped when he said abruptly—

"You are very lonely here. The position of the house is quite isolated, isn't it?"

"Yes," said she, with her heart in her mouth.

"Aren't you ever alarmed by tramps and burglars?"

"Not often," answered Mary, with a rather ghastly smile. "There are two men almost always on the premises, my father and the gardener."

"Have you a man about the place now?"

As she hesitated for the moment what to answer, a way out of her difficulties occurred to her. There was a basement to the vicarage, reached by a flight of stairs, and provided with a strong door at the top. This door could be bolted from the outside, and there was no window to the cellars below large enough for a man to get out by. There were only three small openings, all provided with strong iron bars; so that if once she could persuade her visitor to go down there, he would be safely imprisoned, and she would have time to look about her.

But how was she to get him into the trap?

She knew that both the coachman-gardener and his wife, who lived in a cottage adjoining the stable at the end of the long garden, would on this Saturday evening be out doing their marketing in the village.

"My father is not here," she answered cautiously, after a short pause. "But the coachman lives at the end of the garden."

"I suppose you have some means of communication between the stables and the house?"

"Oh, yes," said Mary quickly. "If you will open that door, and go to your left a little way, you will come to another door on your right, leading to a flight of stairs. Ring the bell in the wall on the left, half way down, and if he is at the stable, the coachman will come."

The visitor rose slowly. He seemed puzzled by these directions, but appeared quite willing to follow them.

"Would you, then, allow me to send him into the village, if he should be here?" he asked.

"Oh, certainly."

"Thank you very much."

He opened the door and went out into the hall, and Mary, running across the room, listened with a fast-beating heart while he pulled open the heavy door at the head of the cellar stairs. She heard him go cautiously down a couple of steps, and then she flew into the hall, ran on tip-toe to the cellar door, which he had left open to enable him to see, and shutting it quickly, pulled the heavy bolt across it, and drew a long, shivering sigh of relief.

If only the old door would hold fast, she was safe.

She did not heed his cries, his knocks on the door, as she ran to the kitchen and beckoned to Perrin, who started up from the chair on which she was sitting by the table, and stared at her young mistress with eyes full of alarm.

"Oh, miss, what is it?"

"There's a madman in the basement. Don't scream. He can't get out. Will you run to the village and get help to secure him?"

"Oh, miss, I daresn't!"

"Why, you will be much safer out of the house than in it—don't you see? It is I who shall have to look out for myself. Do—do go, there's a good girl! I don't know how long the door will hold; it seems to creak on its hinges already."

For the visitor was emphasising his displeasure at the treatment meted out to him by blows, which grew ever more vigorous, upon the basement door.

This sound redoubled Perrin's nervous fears; and although she pretended to agree to go to the village for help, Mary heard the key turned in the lock of her door, when the girl got to her room at the top of the house, and felt quite sure that she should get no help from that quarter.

In the meantime the knocking had ceased, and the silence which followed alarmed her even more than the noise had done. She thought that the madman might be preparing some more effectual attack upon the door, so she went quickly back into the dining-room and hurried to the window, so that, if he should break out, she might be able to run out of the house and seek protection.

Indeed, she was in a divided mind as to whether she should do this at once; but cowardly as Perrin had shown herself to be, Mary did not like the idea of leaving her alone in the house with the lunatic. It occurred to her as she passed by the sideboard, and noted that the great bread-knife was lying on the platter, to wonder what the madman had done with the long knife he had had in his hands when he came into the house. Had he taken it with him? And was he now using it as a tool with which to force open the door?

This seemed highly probable, and when the thought occurred to her, Mary slipped

out into the front garden, afraid to remain indoors.

As she did so, she at once became aware that another visitor was standing at the door.

The joy she felt was so great that she could not repress an exclamation, and she clasped her hands in such evident pleasure that the visitor, smiling, raised his hat and waited for her to speak.

Then she perceived that her behaviour must appear rather extraordinary to him, as he was a stranger to her.

"You—you wish to see the Vicar?" she asked timidly.

"Yes. I suppose I have the pleasure of speaking to his daughter?"

Mary blushed and smiled.

"Yes, I'm his daughter," she said. "But papa is away; he's gone to take the Sunday duty for a friend of his, and won't be back till the day after to-morrow. Is there any message I can give him for you?"

She wondered whether she would dare to tell the visitor of the dilemma she was in, and decided that she might make the venture. For he was a sedate and dignified man, with mild, blue eyes and grave, gentle manners, who would certainly not fail to listen to her patiently, and who would, she thought, at least be willing to take a message to the village for her.

In the meantime he answered her question.

"I have no particular message for him, thank you. I looked in for a chat, that was all."

"You know my father, then?"

"I have that pleasure, and I am very pleased at this opportunity of meeting his daughter."

"And I'm very glad to meet you," said Mary ingenuously, "for a dreadful thing has happened. I'm quite sure you'll think I'm dreaming, or that I'm crazy myself, but—there's a lunatic in the house!"

The stranger smiled, but looked, as she had almost expected, rather incredulous.

"A lunatic! You don't mean it?"

"Indeed I do. A man rushed into the house by the window, not more than ten minutes ago, with a knife in his hands. And——"

"A knife! Did he attack you?"

"No; I took care not to give him the chance. I got him into the cellar by pretending there was a bell there that he could ring to summon the gardener, and then I—I bolted him in."

"Well done! And in the meantime, of course, you've sent for further assistance?"

"Not yet. I've only got one maid in the house, and she's locked herself in the top room, and is too much frightened to come out. The other two are both out, and so is my aunt, so I'm practically alone."

"Dear me! A serious position for a young lady. Isn't there anything I can do?"

"Oh, if you only would! I should be so deeply grateful if you would go to the constable's house for me, and ask him to come and to bring someone with him to help."

"I'll go with pleasure. But I don't like the idea of leaving you alone in the house with the fellow. Couldn't we put something before the door, so that he can't get out till I come with the constable?"

As he spoke he stepped into the room, crossed to the door, and, stooping, looked at the lock.

"Pity there's no key!" said he. "He would find it difficult to force a second door, even if he should manage the first."

"Oh, I don't suppose he'll do that. Only I couldn't help feeling frightfully nervous."

"Of course not. I consider your courage simply wonderful. And now for the constable."

He smiled at her, and was crossing the room again on his way to the window, when he stopped abruptly, and looking at a little water-colour drawing that hung on the wall on the right-hand side of the mantelpiece, exclaimed—

"By Jove!"

Then he looked quickly over the pictures that hung near—a little collection of paintings, some in oil and some in water-colour—of which the Vicar was very proud. The visitor admired them enthusiastically.

"Ah, I see you are connoisseurs here!" he cried, as he examined a charming landscape which was one of the Vicar's treasures.

Mary, almost forgetting the madman in the cellar in her delight and relief at the unexpected finding of a friend, told him the history of that particular picture, and of the discovery it had been—one of the great events, indeed, of the Vicar's simple life. The visitor, still intently examining the picture, laughed and nodded enthusiastically.

"Ah, I know the fine frenzy of a find like that!" said he. "How one gloats over the recollection afterwards, and wonders whether another such piece of luck will ever come one's way again!"

But Mary, standing a few steps behind him, and nearer to the sideboard, made no

comment or reply. She was, indeed, in a state of sick dread and scarcely able to breathe. For on the sideboard on her right hand was the bread-platter, as she had noticed it a few minutes before on entering the room from the hall; but the big bread-knife which had been lying upon it was no longer there!

As it could not be the excited young fellow with the disordered hair and the flushed face who had taken it and hidden it somewhere, was it the mild-mannered, blue-eyed man now in the room with her?

And, one terrible thought flashing through her brain quickly after the other, she remembered what she had heard about the mad Mr. Brewster and his interest in art, and asked herself, while the blood seemed to run cold in her veins, whether she had made an awful, ghastly mistake, and whether the man whom she had admitted as a friend and a welcome guest were really the escaped lunatic, after all.

Scarcely had the idea entered her mind when the visitor, apparently noticing her silence, turned so suddenly that she started back and uttered a little cry. And then, looking him full in the face, she wondered how she could ever have doubted the truth that he was mad; for the blue eyes now seemed to stare with an unnatural glare, and the slim, white hand with which he began to caress his light brown beard seemed to her fascinated eyes to move with a strange, uncanny, stealthy motion, as if the long fingers were feeling for something — something deadly.

Their eyes met in a gaze which was like the last look exchanged between hound and hunted hare. Mary felt that nothing on earth could have made her turn away, as if the wild, blue eyes had a power in them which made her weak and helpless and at his mercy.

And then, while still stroking his beard with those horrible, white fingers, that she saw without looking at them, he smiled at her and suddenly said, in a voice which sounded to her like that of a man who was hungry, starving, so eager, so hoarse was it—

"Look at that!"

At the same moment he pointed with the forefinger of his right hand to the door behind her. She was about to obey his command instinctively; but suddenly remembering that it would be fatal to turn her back to him, she said in a whisper—

"What is it you want me to look at?"

He frowned impatiently.

"Look behind you, look behind you!" he said fiercely.

But she would not.

"Tell me what it is you see," said she, in a hoarse voice.

He stamped on the floor.

"Why don't you see for yourself?" said he, still pointing; and as he indicated the door behind her with his left hand, he put his right hand stealthily into the inner pocket of his coat.

Mary felt paralysed with horror. She guessed that what he had concealed there was the knife he had taken from the platter, and she seemed to feel already the touch of the cold steel across her throat.

Still she would not turn. She knew that to face him steadfastly was her last and only chance. The minutes seemed hours while they stood thus facing each other. Her brain seemed to be bursting, and she felt as if something was surging in her head higher and higher, till each moment seemed to be the last in which she could endure the awful tension. She must scream, she must turn round; the strain was getting too great to be borne.

Meanwhile the madman was still pointing with his white finger to the door behind her, and she was feeling that she would give way, that the fatal fascination of his attitude would be too strong for her, that she must turn and—die.

And then, when her breath was coming in such gasps that they seemed to fill the room with sound, she heard a door open and footsteps which she recognised in the hall.

Summoning all the strength she had left in her, she screamed "Millie!" with all her might.

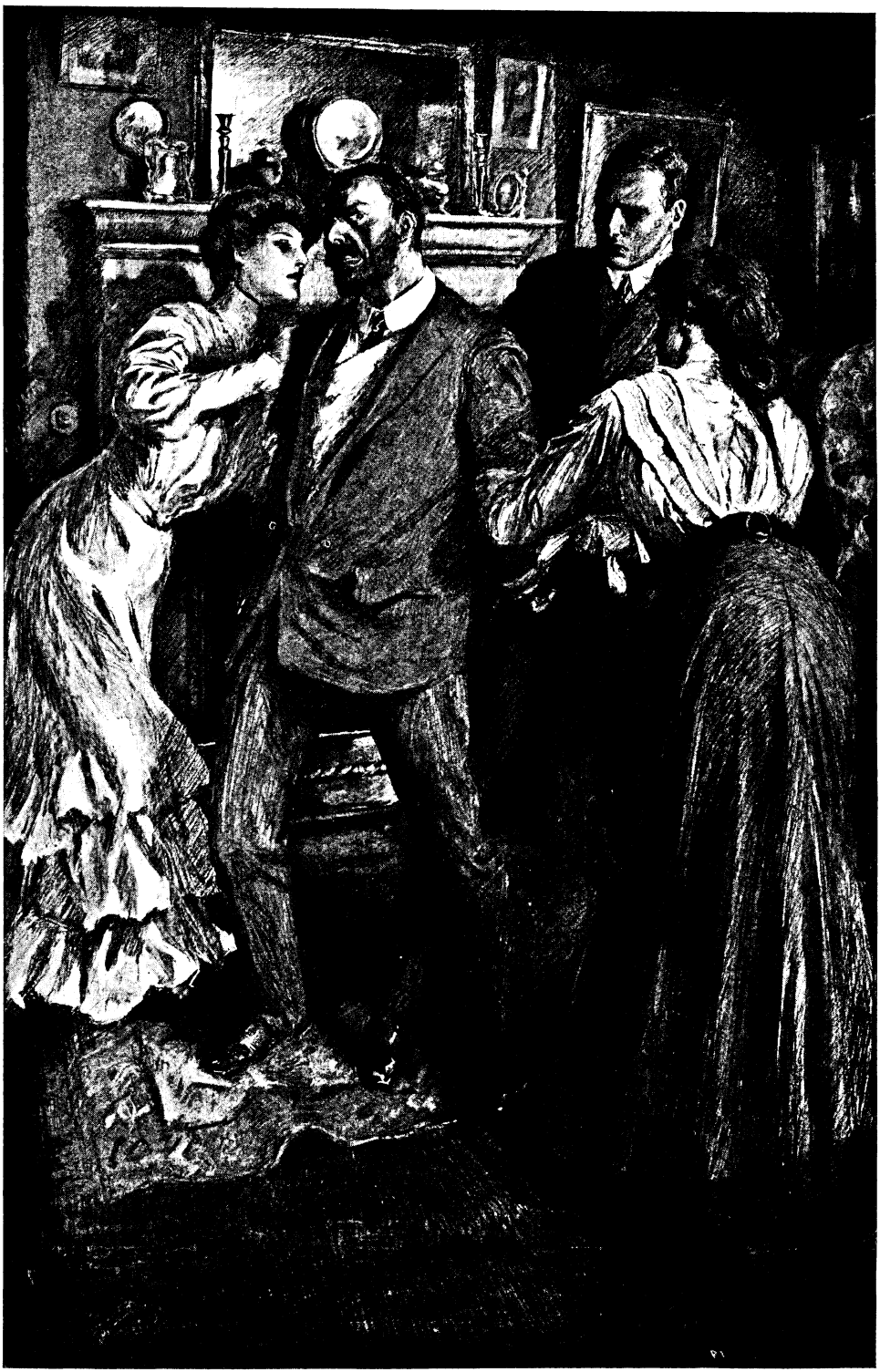
But, to her horror, her voice had lost its power, and it was only a hoarse, gurgling whisper that came from her lips. The madman smiled. The smile, blood-curdling and with a sort of hopeful ferocity in it, seemed to give her back a little strength. Urged by pure terror, she cried again—

"Millie! Millie! help! help!"

Then the door opened behind her, and she heard the voice of the cook, crying in amazement—

"My gracious! who's that?"

The next moment the worst had happened. Millie turned to shut the door behind her, and in an instant the madman had darted past Mary, who, turning quickly, was just in time to see him fling his left arm round the girl's throat and plunge his right hand into his pocket.



"The new-comer, with the assistance of the two girls, seized the madman's hands and bound them together."

With all her might, Mary flung herself upon his right arm from behind, while the screaming Millie struggled to free herself from the grasp of his left.

The tussle seemed to go on for ages. Mary clung with all the force of two muscular young hands to the madman's right arm, making it impossible for him to get at the weapon he had concealed.

In the meantime she uttered short directions to Millie, who shrieked and shouted so lustily as to inspire the hope in Mary's mind that someone would hear her.

And then, just when both the women felt themselves to be at the last gasp, when the madman, uttering short cries under his breath and lashing himself into fury, began to tighten his grasp of Millie, while her cries grew fainter, and when Mary felt her hands growing too weak to hold his stronger arm, there came suddenly to their ears a sound as of something heavy being flung down in the hall outside.

It was the forcing open of the basement door.

The next moment the door of the dining-room was flung open, and the man whom Mary had locked in the cellar burst into the room.

Not much longer was the issue in doubt.

The arrival of this ally, fresh, strong, and thoroughly aware of the character of the man with whom he had to deal, turned the tables. Whipping out his own handkerchief, the new-comer, with the assistance of the two girls, who at once acted according to his instructions, seized the madman's hands and bound them together so tightly that he could not get them free. Then again, with the help of the two women, the unfortunate madman, who did not utter one word, but glared at them and watched them keenly, drawing deep breaths and fighting with the strength of two men, was forced into a chair, to which he was bound with the strong silken ropes which looped up the window-curtains.

The work of securing him was scarcely finished when the return of Miss Kenley upon her bicycle brought another ally. The Vicar's sister, who took in the terrible situation with but a few words, went back to the village for help, and before many minutes were over had brought half-a-dozen willing helpers, with whose assistance the unhappy lunatic was safely secured until the authorities of the asylum from which he had escaped could be summoned by telephone from the nearest town.

In the meantime poor Mary only recovered from her distress at the struggle in which she had taken part to fall into another even more embarrassing at her treatment of her own ally.

She whispered her agonies to her aunt, who apologised for her niece's stupidity as well as she could.

The young man, who was quite good-humoured and highly amused by the adventure, frankly owned that the lady's mistake was brought about by his own fault.

"I had been attacked by this man in the road," said he, "just as I was coming out of Scarfield Court, the place my father has taken a mile away from here."

Miss Kenley uttered an ejaculation of interest.

"Oh, are you one of the Wares," said she—"the new people at the Court?"

"Yes; my name is Reginald Ware," said the young man, smiling. "As I say, I was attacked by this man, from whom I managed to wrench away a large knife he was carrying."

"Then that was what I saw in your hand! It was that that frightened me so," said poor Mary apologetically.

"I ought to have told you all about it at once," said Reginald Ware, who was quite as humble as she. "But I didn't like to alarm you by speaking about the madman, and I was only too glad to have managed to escape him, as I thought. I'm very, very sorry, and I only wish I'd had a little more sense, and then I should have saved you from this fright."

The young people, though they laughed at themselves and at each other, were rather interested in one another, too.

When the unfortunate Mr. Brewster was safely secured and taken back to the asylum, and the Vicar returned home and was introduced to young Mr. Ware, and informed of the adventure, Mary's father was rash enough to think it only right to express his sorrow for what his young neighbour had suffered by giving him a general invitation to call when he liked.

But not long afterwards Reginald Ware fell into a habit of dropping in so constantly that the Vicar began to wish that he could get rid of him.

Since then Miss Kenley has had to warn her brother that, when he does get rid of his too persistent young neighbour, he will have to make up his mind to get rid of his own daughter, too.

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"MY LADY'S GARDEN." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

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"TWO VOICES." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

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THE ART OF MR. J. YOUNG HUNTER.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

A GREAT French writer claims that the author and the orator both love applause. He could have known no painters, or he would have included them in his too contracted category. No class of men covets it more or by it more largely benefits. The sound of well-deserved applause is to the painter the sweetest melody in the world, for it decides questions put to him, the one by his diffidence, the other by his confidence; for his diffidence says: "If my picture is liked, I shall be surprised," whilst his confidence says: "If my picture is not liked, I shall be no less surprised." And when public approval greets the artist, his work benefits, since consciousness of our own knowledge increases it.

Mr. John Young Hunter has early received this help towards increase of knowledge and, in a professional career which has barely exceeded ten years in extent, he has succeeded in establishing himself as a painter of noteworthy prominence and as one who has already done admirable work.

Born in the 'seventies, he received his general education at Clifton College, and although in due course he attended an art studio and ultimately became a student of Burlington House, his first and, indeed, the chief part of his art education came from his father, Mr. Colin Hunter, A.R.A.

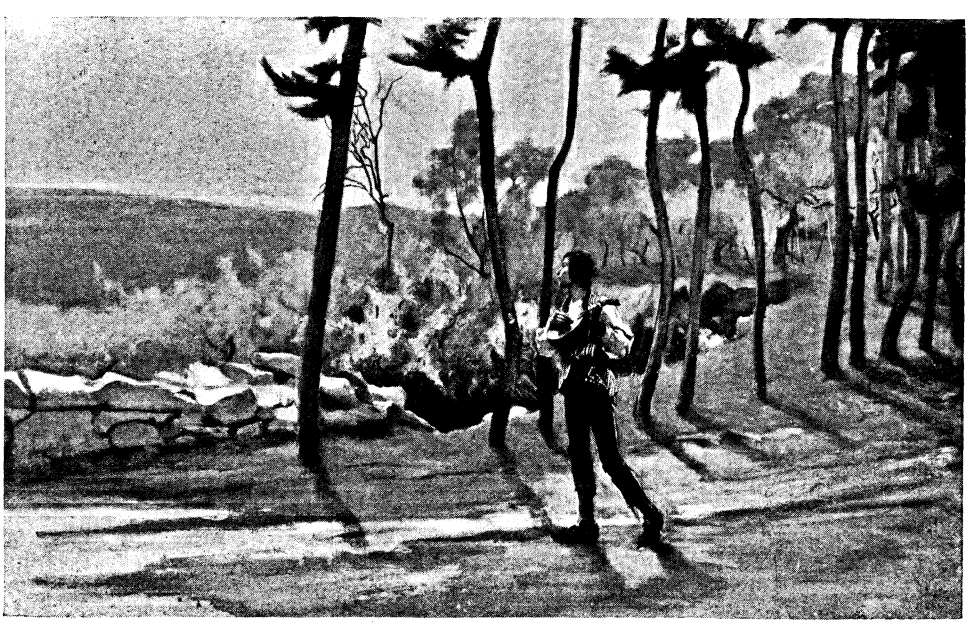
All those people who have experience of the way in which knowledge is acquired, agree that pupils are bound to accept something of the methods they see used by those around them. This being the case in a studio where for a few hours each day the student puts in an attendance, one can see how very much harder it must be to abstain from employing the same means which



"THE PHILOSOPHER OF FERNEY." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

one has seen used, and successfully used, all one's life.

An artist must, by the nature of the material which he has to employ, be conventional. Unless he paints with colour which others, as well as he himself, approve, his labour is vain. If he really used an original palette—a palette, be it understood, being the colours placed upon that so-called article, the vermilion, yellow ochre, ultramarine, and white which form in combination the foundation of most pictures—and if he intentionally went away from accepted formulæ, his work would have no merit, for one cannot escape from the fact that blue has to be used in the painting of skies, and that both reds and yellows enter largely into the painting of flesh. It is accepted, therefore, that the student is, in his palette, in agreement with his master; also that in laying-on of paint he cannot—at first, at least—escape his master's convention. When, therefore, in

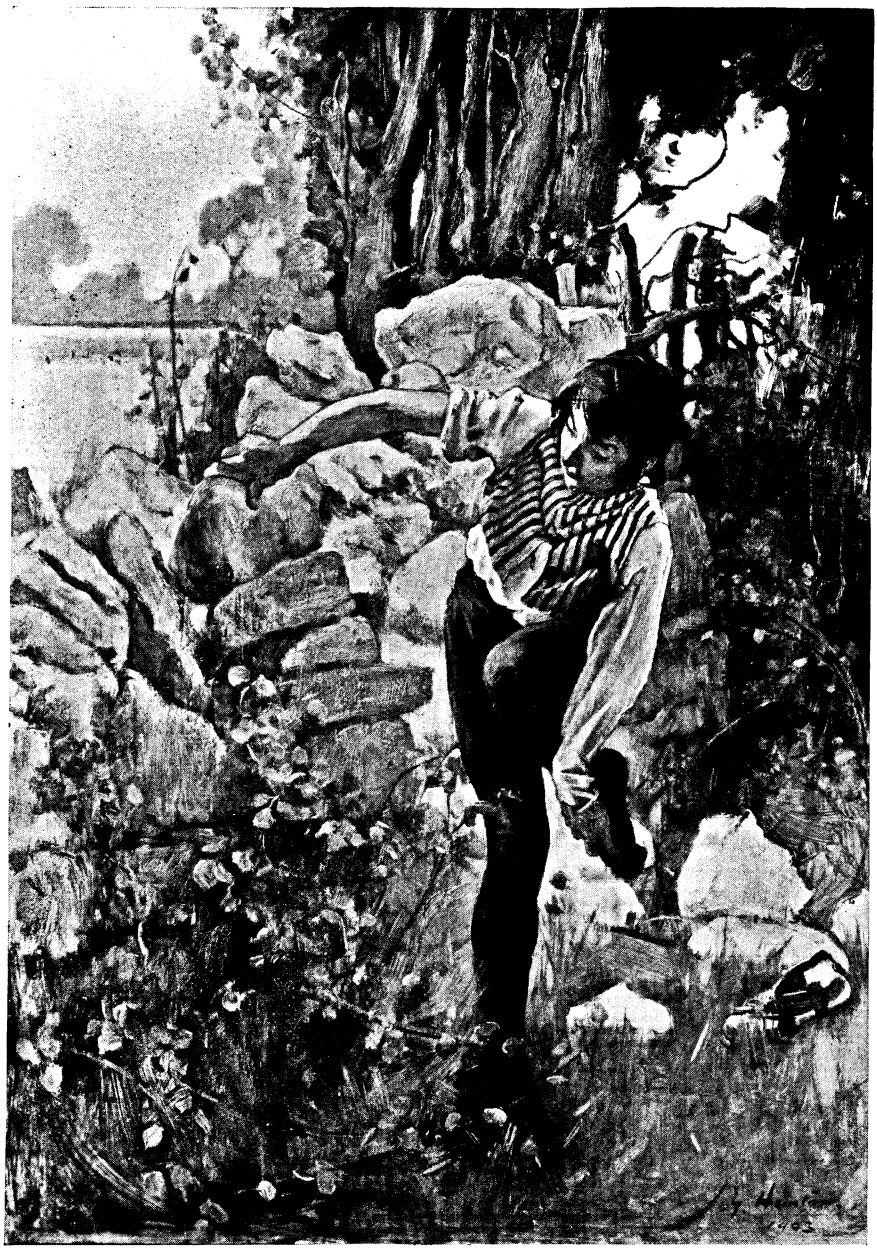


"SPRING AMONG THE TUSCAN HILLS." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.



"FOREST LOVERS." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

From the original in the collection of A. K. Clark, Esq.



"IDLE HANDS AND STUMBLING FEET." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

addition to these similitudes of style, the bias of heredity in sight is added, to enhance the likeness between the works of master and pupil, we at once realise how hard it must be for a son to branch into work dissimilar from that which is being done by his father. For it is trick of temperament which makes him present a similar subject in a similar manner.

When, therefore, after having had two Scotch landscapes well hung in the two successive Academy Exhibitions of 1905, 1906, there came to Mr. J. Young Hunter full awakening of the artistic sense, and he saw that, without copying a single material manner, without consciously employing one of his father's methods, his pictures would, if he continued to paint landscape, but gain



JUDITH SHAKESPEARE—"RINGS AND THINGS AND FINE ARRAY." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

for him a success qualified by the word "imitative" being attached to it, he determined to develop his artistic talent upon other lines.

His breaking away from his father's style was founded on no argument of dissatisfaction with his father's work. To suppose this would be to make an incurable mistake. He, on the contrary, admired it and its many essential excellences. But he was awake to the danger that, unless he conceived, asserted, and developed a different kind of art, he would be held to be but an incomplete copyist. But one of the most difficult effects which arise from inexperience is that a man cannot possibly justify an experiment before making it; and another is, that those who encourage us in our attempt to make the experiment have to accede to measures of which they may believe they will ultimately have to disapprove.



"PETS." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

From the picture in the collection of Mr. Alfred Parsons, A.R.A.

Mr. Colin Hunter gave, indeed, but little encouragement to his son to make art his profession. "He was dubious," says Mr. Young Hunter, in recalling the events of his early days, "about the advisability of it, but this only made me the more determined. I remember that when I told him of my resolve to take a studio (having hitherto worked in an upstairs room at Melbury Road, liable to frequent interruption), he rather ridiculed the idea. I am glad to say he never had to pay the rent, although it cost me £100 a year. For I sold landscapes easily, and with occasional portraits I was always able to meet my expenses from the first, except once—and I can well remember the shame and mortification that possessed me when I had to borrow thirty pounds. I was able to pay it back within a month, however, to my great relief. During this, my first year in my own studio, I painted the full length of Miss Mac-Michael, which was hung in one of the four corners of the large room at the Royal Academy."

What Mr. Chesterton calls "a perfect



"MY LADY CHARITY." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

The artist's picture exhibited in this year's Royal Academy.



"COME, LASSIES AND LADS." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

bankrupt sublimity" must have been the first conscious feeling of Mr. J. Young Hunter on coming to the decision that he would abandon landscape for figure-painting, free methods of brushwork, and apply himself to the study of the figure in the tight school of the Pre-Raphaelites, where they "count it crime to let a truth slip."

Of this school, some few years ago, an able art critic wrote in the *Studio*: "It is one which has latterly gathered to itself a very large number of adherents among the younger painters, and, for want of a better name, can be called that of the New Pre-Raphaelites. It has grown up, apparently, as an expression of the reaction which has recently set in against the realistic beliefs taught so assiduously a quarter of a century ago. At the end of the 'seventies there was a prevailing idea that the only mission of the artist was to record with absolute fidelity the facts of Nature. He was told that only in strict realism could he hope to find salvation, and that any modification of the actualities of the life around him was contrary to correct principles. To attempt to build upon Nature fanciful inventions, to seek for suggestions which must give him scope for the exercise of his imaginative faculties, even to select from the mass of available material what he thought most suitable for the illustration of a preconceived idea, was, according to the dogma of his teachers, to depart from the lines which alone could lead him to the highest type of achievement. If he was not a realist, an unselective and uncompromising student of everyday commonplaces, he was told that he must inevitably sink into a follower



"CELIA AND JOAN." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

From the picture in the collection of F. J. Mirrielees, Esq.

of some formal convention, and destroy all his hopes of future eminence by losing the power of receiving impressions at first hand."

It was during the first year of what we may term his artistic independence that Mr. J. Young Hunter, in rebellion to such teaching, produced his Decorative rather than Pre-Raphaelite "My Lady's Garden," which was bought for the nation

under the terms of the Chantrey Bequest. In this we have a picture of peculiar artistic quality, and one entirely successful in its endeavour to portray by mediæval design the decorative world of old romance.

In decorative art the artist reaches out towards, he attains to, a world beyond the prescribed limits of everyday life, and wins for himself a new kingdom of content, a richer, because a more unhedged and unrestricted realm, a realm in which care for things of the intellect and imagination is subservient to form and colour, in which there is a sense of freedom from the shackles by aid of form and colour, as distinct from the matter it may chance to explain. It is an art subject to laws of limitation, one of impassivity rather than repose; reserve and again reserve, and once again reserve, are its characteristic. Within an area "undisturbed by any moral ambition" it does its most sincere and earnest work. It has the power, much as death has, to set the faces which it touches free from strain, free from all that is accidental, in serene immobility; and we gaze upon it unperplexed by the time in which it arose and by the time in which it deals. It is a triumph of character



"FINE FEATHERS." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

From the picture in the collection of W. Donaldson, Esq.

of period, and a successful endeavour has been made to cast off modern and local *débris*. In the realm of decorative art is shown so high an indifference to mundane things that no vulgarity touches it; thus it is freed from the perplexities of different epochs and their tangled interests, and bounded by the shores of indeterminate time. Breadth, centrality, repose, measure, purity, and temperance, are its special marks. Its very women are abstractions, shadows of an earlier, diviner type.

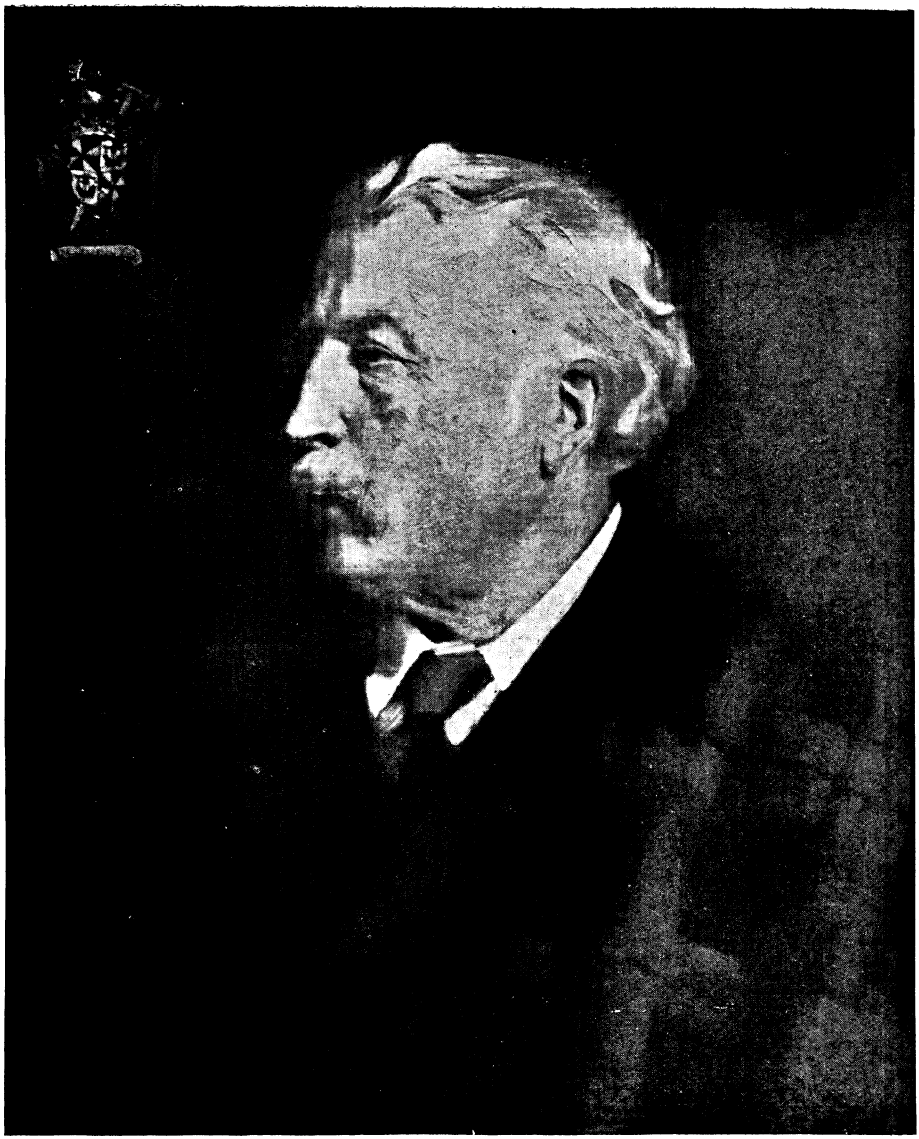
To produce decorative art is to deal with the sensuous side of art in the Pagan manner, for its special aim is to give pleasure over situation, of which, indeed, it suggests no development. "A laugh, a cry, the business of the world" is not for it.

In the catalogue of the National Gallery of British Art at Millbank, the picture, "My Lady's Garden," is thus described—

"On a lawn, which is divided from a garden behind by a row of espalier fruit trees, a richly dressed lady is bringing food in a Venetian glass dish for three peacocks, whose brilliant colours are relieved by the green of the grass. The scene is laid in a formal pleasaunce sheltered by high yew hedges, poplars, and cedars, seen dark against the evening sky. The garden is cut into



"A SONG WITHOUT WORDS." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.



HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, K.T. BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

spirals and curves by geometrical beds, outlined with box-hedging. The lady wears a white cap that comes over the ears, a yellow gown, with blue insertions, embroidered in gold, and large sleeves lined with purple velvet."

The year of this picture's purchase, 1899, was the year of the artist's marriage to the lady, herself an accomplished painter, whose portrait is here reproduced. In that year Mr. Young Hunter and his wife went to Florence, prepared to penetrate, with youth's inexhaustible, unrivalled thirst for knowledge, into the very secrets of paint.

It has been said that all the great Florentines were preoccupied with thoughts of death, and that it is to this sentiment that the seriousness of Florentine fifteenth-century art is due.

In the very atmosphere of the city there is something strange and mournful, and the journey to Italy, instead of putting the student in possession of new talents and bringing out originality, stultifies and makes sterile for a time those of which he



SCENE FROM THE PLAY OF "DAVID GARRICK." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

is already possessed. To unite that which he has already acquired in England to that which Italy, in far back ages, has produced, and to harmonise the two into a new school—this, it may be presumed, is the ambition of all young painters. Often, when actually they come in contact with this great bygone art, they can do no more than admire. The very vastness of it is unsettling, and imagination is tied.

Mr. Young Hunter felt that each picture he studied became an object "loosed into a group of impressions," inconsistent, unstable, flickering, extinguished in their turn by his very consciousness of them.

Such was his impression; but, as a matter of fact, his sojourn in Italy has had a marked influence upon his art. He was, at the time he went there, inclined to swing away from the teachings of the naturalistic school, and approach too closely to conventionalism; but the new points of view which he acquired helped to guide him into paths of broader practice.

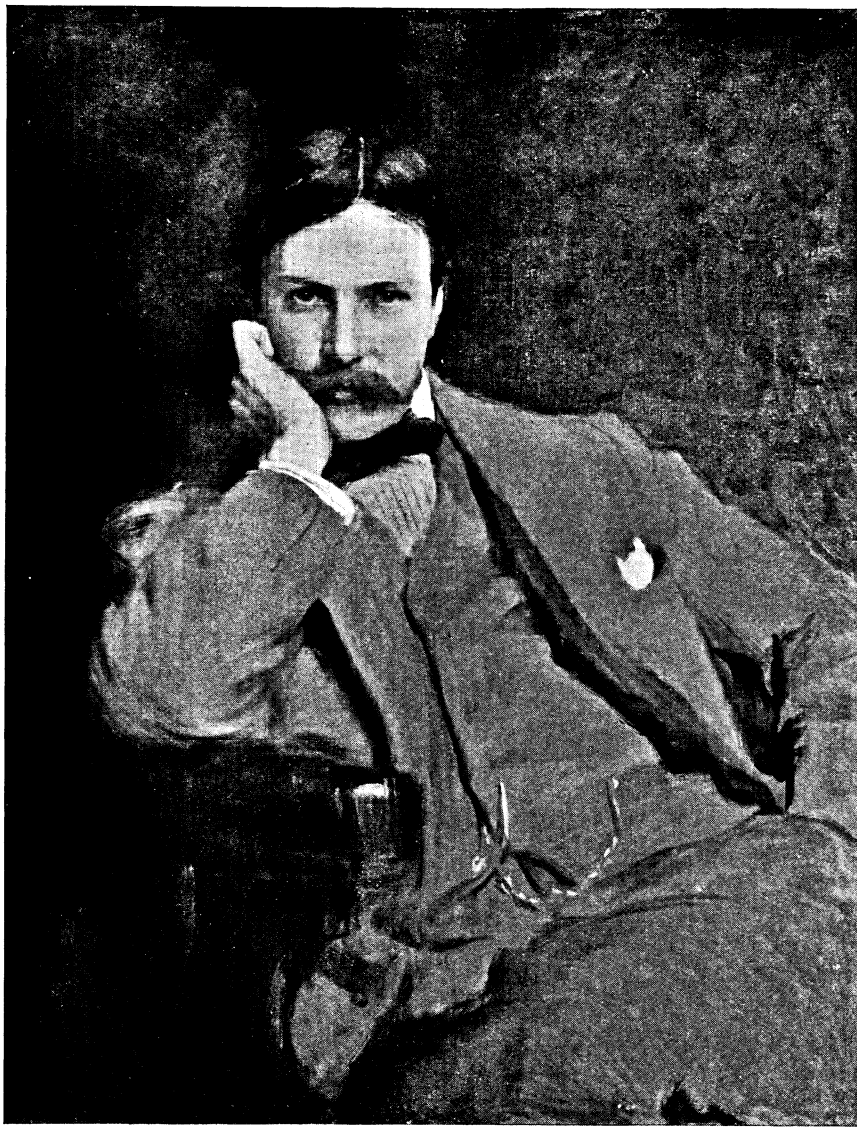


MRS. J. YOUNG HUNTER. A PORTRAIT BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.

Of the pictures here reproduced it may be added that "The Philosopher of Ferney" is a record of one of those freaks of humour by which both Frederick the Great and Voltaire by their sharpness of tongue sacrificed many a friendship. Why the King of Prussia christened Voltaire a stork it is very difficult to say—perhaps because a stork makes a loud noise by the chattering of its mandibles; perhaps because he is a visitant to many parts of the Continent; or perhaps because of his extraordinary thinness. Voltaire, exiled from the favour alike of France and of Prussia, took up his residence at Ferney, and Mr. Young Hunter presents him as hovering over the Canton, since he spent his time whilst



"MARKET DAY." BY J. YOUNG HUNTER.



J. YOUNG HUNTER. A PORTRAIT BY G. SPENCER WATSON.

there in the defence and protection of the victims of religious intolerance.

The subject of the picture called "Judith Shakespeare" was taken from William Black's charming novel of that name.

"Spring Among the Tuscan Hills" was the first-fruits of Mr. Young Hunter's tour—a record of a tramp which husband and wife took in quest of the picturesque after their stay in Florence. They visited Perugia, "the empress of hill-set Italian cities;" the lesser heights of Assisi, Spoleto, and Trevi; Siena, Bologna, Verona, Ravenna, each city whose gates frame visions of laughing fields, where "mediæval architecture and the rich florescence of Nature lie side by side in amity." With visits to Munich, Nuremburg, Rothenburg, Brussels, and Antwerp their travels ended, and Mr. Young Hunter came home to issue from his studio in Suffolk a succession of notable pictures, each of which shows that he is going forward in his art, steadily, year by year, amplifying his methods and widening the gates of his knowledge.

Sometimes he steals from work a few hours for relaxation, and, being a sportsman, changes the brush for a gun, a rod, a golf-club, or a cricket-bat, as the seasons dictate.

A WIFE FOR LORD THOMAS.

By HARRISON RHODES.

MISS MARRIOTT turned into the Park at the Fifty-ninth Street entrance by the Plaza. She wore a dull green gown, with a hint of pink somewhere about the jacket; if one had all the time in the world, it would deserve further attention. In her hat, too, was a suggestion of spring, shy flowers peeping from beneath green leaves. But, as novelists are apt to say, winter was in her heart; a frown, at least, was on her face, and a kind of clouded and angry look in her deep, blue eyes.

Had any one of the gentlemen loafing on the park benches in the sunshine of this April morning been there at the same hour the day before, he might, had he had any taste for amateur detective speculations, now have thought that he could put two and two together and divine what now troubled this charming young woman. For the day before he would have noticed her—that is inevitable; one always noticed Sally Marriott, her lovely flushed cheeks, her eyes, and her gold-brown hair—he would have noticed her taking this same promenade in the companionship of one of the opposite sex. Now she took it alone, and—as it would not have been difficult to discover—Count Antoni de Scasz had sailed that morning on the *Lauretania*. And it was true, in a way, that this young gentleman was responsible for Miss Marriott's frown, but not at all as the first amateur detective who came along might have thought.

It was all at the time of the last and most famous of international marriages. All sorts of friends and relatives had accompanied the bridegroom's party. Fifth Avenue, as you will remember, was full of Huns and Poles and Lithuanians; and strange East-of-Europe noblemen were rushing to and fro at all hours of the day and night when it was possible for fashionable women to entertain them. They lent variety to the season's gaiety. They were very agreeable, many of them, and of them this same de Scasz was perhaps the most agreeable. Now, when there was a question of nice men, it was often very easy for Sally Marriott to get the nicest. So it happened, naturally enough, that she saw something of Count Antoni. It went so far even that two or three mornings he took walks with her while she gave the dog Niggles the air in the Park. All the native-born New York men are busy at that hour, so, for a change, the companionship of a Hun was not unwelcome.

Toni—everyone calls him that—was a nice, bright-faced boy of twenty-six, with soft, blue eyes and a soft, brown moustache and a pretty, soft way with women. He had laughed and joked with Sally in most companionable fashion, and then, during this last morning's walk, with a caressing voice and a twinkle in his eye, had asked her to marry him. He could not easily have done less than that, he knew; but he never particularly wanted her to accept him, nor thought for a moment she would. He was sure she understood, but he was a gentleman, and he proposed very nicely, considering that he knew she hadn't money. He accepted his refusal gracefully, and as they were in a secluded part of the Park, he bent and kissed her hand. She demurred on a well-known point of foreign etiquette.

"You mustn't, Toni; I'm not a married woman."

The boy assumed a whimsical little air of despair. "Ah, yes," he said, "but is that *my* fault?"

So Toni passes out of the story.

His presence had been agreeable enough. But what was intolerable was that Hilda Macdonald, as reported direct to Sally this very morning by Agnes Crutcheon, should have said that she, Sally Marriott, was always dangling after foreigners and never being able to catch one. It wasn't merely that if one liked—Miss Marriott smiled as she thought of that nice Toni clicking his heels together and bending over the hand that had just been refused him. It wasn't merely that Hilda had always professed to be a friend — of course, it was from one's friends one expected this sort of thing, she told herself, with cynicism quite unsuited to such a spring morning. It was pre-eminently that she herself was an American of the Americans, and so ought to have been spared such attacks. Had she not settled in her mind long ago that when she married, it would be—if there is such a word—compatriotically? Had she not as honest a contempt as anyone for these loveless, worldly wise foreign alliances? And had she not—

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here the frown deepened—a very clear idea that it was just because Hilda had an exaggerated idea of the importance of handles to names that she was making such a row about Count Toni? Hilda had, so Agnes Crutcheon reported, talked a good deal about Americanism. Miss Marriott now registered a dark vow. Mrs. Macdonald's period of mourning was over. The very next foreigner who turned up in New York should be cast at once in her path, and—and everyone should see. Our young lady's reflections were, as may be seen, cynical and disillusioned. But they ended always in this special project of precipitating Mrs. Macdonald into the first available nobleman's arms.

In this mood Miss Marriott rounded a little curve that brought the path into the sun and along the edge of the brimming lake; and then—the dispensations of Providence are very strange when one is young and extremely good-looking, and walks in the Park of an April morning—then she saw a figure in grey-green tweeds ahead of her, sitting upon a bench, with long legs extended into the path with a certain unmistakable ease to be obtained, when long legs are concerned, only by British birth. As she advanced, he turned, and she gave a little start. Just finding a good-looking Englishman in her path was not sufficiently unusual to startle Sally Marriott. But this time, unless she were not mistaken, it was all so ridiculously *à propos*, just as though she had imagined him into existence on that park bench for her own immediate purposes.

"I'm not mistaken, am I?" It was he who spoke as he rose. "It *is* Miss Marriott, isn't it? I hope you haven't forgotten me."

"Just a minute," she warned. "Yes, I've got it. Biarritz! You dined at Lady Helen Alexander's, and then—let's see, yes—there was lunch at the Nattings'. That's right, isn't it?"

"Yes," he answered smilingly, "though I dare say I couldn't have remembered the places."

"And your name's de Courtenay." She was delighted at her good memory. "Thomas—Sir Thomas de Courtenay."

"It's Tom, all right. Really, I'm most awfully flattered——"

"Oh, you remembered my name," she commented carelessly.

"Oh, but that's different, you know——"

She acknowledged the compliment, first with a smile and then with "Thank you, Sir Thomas."

"I was going to say, you know, it's Lord Thomas, if we're to be accurate."

"I beg your pardon!"

"It doesn't matter, does it?" He certainly looked as if it didn't.

"It matters a great deal in America, Lord Thomas."

It was impossible not to think of Hilda. The girl's spirits revived at this pleasant prospect of adventure, and her feelings for this convenient Lord Thomas grew almost warmly friendly.

"May I come along," he was asking, "so that you can tell me all about it? It's jolly good luck for me to have run across a competent guide to America the morning I land."

"You landed this morning——"

"Yes, I got a bath at the hotel, and thought I'd have a bit of air. I was going to look up George Douglas at the Brook Club about lunch. You're the first person I've seen."

"And this is your first time here?"

"Yes."

"Then I've actually got you with the bloom on."

He laughed and rubbed his cheek, as if distrusting the morning's shave. She looked at him. The bloom was very pleasant—the fresh, open-air colour, the sort of heather and moorland atmosphere he seemed to carry with him.

"It's a great responsibility," he said.

"Yes, I know. But I'm willing to take it on—that's the English phrase, isn't it?—if you'll be honest with me."

"Why shouldn't I be?" he asked, in some surprise.

"You should be. You will be when you see what an understanding person I am."

She looked at a tiny, jewelled watch that hung like a locket from her neck.

"I've even time to sit down quietly and talk it over," she went on. "Here is a bench which seems suitable."

They had got in their walk to the crest of a little hill, with a lovely view.

"I'm most awfully delighted——" began Lord Thomas, and the fact need surprise no one.

"Well," Miss Marriott replied judicially, "that is as it may be. Wait. What I want to know is why you're here. No wonder you look confused!" she laughed. "No, I'm not a detective. In any case, nothing that you shall say shall be used against you."

"I'm here—I came out because I'd never seen the States, and thought I'd like to.

And, yes, I thought I might do a little turn to my advantage."

"I thought perhaps it was that."

"You know, you are most awfully mysterious."

"I'll explain," she said gravely. "My memory has been working still further. You see, I saw very little of you at Biarritz; I went away early. But I saw Mrs. Natting later; she gave me quantities of gossip. You knew that Miss Waterman from St. Louis, didn't you?"

"Waterman? Yes, a rather pretty girl."

"A rather rich girl," interjected Miss Marriott.

Her companion stiffened a little, another process assisted by British birth.

"I dare say," he said in a cool and detached tone. "You all are, aren't you?"

"Oh, don't get angry—at least, not yet! I'm sure Mrs. Natting told me something about some de Courtenay man who tried very hard to marry Miss Waterman."

"Oh, that——" he began. And then he stopped and smiled, a little mockingly, a little scornfully. "I think my brain is working at last. So you think that, having failed with the fair Waterman, I now——"

"Of course, now you're angry. Oh, of course, you ought to be. But just let me go on. I was not born yesterday."

He took a glance at her, and his face softened a little.

"Oh, I'm very well preserved," she murmured in acknowledgment. "I only mean that I'm not just a sentimental young fool, that I'm quite worldly enough for all practical purposes. I don't in the least blame you for wanting to marry the rich St. Louisan."

"Well," he said slowly, "in that case, I won't deny the story, of course."

"If you haven't anything but your title, and haven't been brought up to earn your living——"

"That, of course, is very uncomfortable."

"American girls are often very nice, even when they have quite a lot of money. I think you'd be perfectly right in coming over here with the definite purpose of marrying one. You think I'm amazingly frank, but if I'm to be a competent guide to New York, I must know what my employer wants."

There was a pause. Miss Marriott gazed upon the lovely view, and Lord Thomas de Courtenay appeared to meditate. Finally he spoke, in the gentlest voice.

"Have you," he asked, "quite a lot of money?" The words were impertinent, but the expression in his face, had she looked at him, was not offensive. She turned pale, however, and got up from the bench.

"You misunderstood my remarks."

"Oh, don't, please——" he began protestingly.

"I'm poor," she went on, "quite unusually poor. I shall marry for money, of course, being worldly. Everyone says that about me." She spoke quickly, with an unexpected note of feeling.

"Dear Miss Marriott"—Lord Thomas stood by her side—"don't, please, lose your charming sense of humour. It was making us get on so jolly well. I'm not such an abandoned ass as to suppose you——" —he paused, and there was a twinkle in his eye—"as to suppose you were speaking for yourself. Besides, don't we both understand that your poverty is an insuperable barrier? Come, Miss Marriott——"

She couldn't help it—she laughed.

"But perhaps you have someone else in mind for me."

"I have," she answered.

This was the beginning of the arrangement for casting Lord Thomas de Courtenay in Hilda Macdonald's path. For now Mrs. Macdonald's dear Sally spoke openly to Lord Thomas about dear Hilda. Miss Marriott had the proper enthusiasm of a friend—more than that, of a tradesman displaying his wares. And her listener displayed a gravity that was almost disconcerting. He particularly asked about the money side, saying repeatedly that for him it was of the greatest importance. Occasionally, of course, his comments were a little lighter. He considered, for example, that Mrs. Macdonald's being a great friend of Miss Marriott's was an enormous advantage. And when Hilda's dark beauty was described, he admitted to a lifelong passion for the brunette. "Yet," he added, "now and then a lighter colouring is not so bad." (It has been mentioned—has it not?—that Sally Marriott was inclined to fairness.) Still, these symptoms of a frivolous disposition and a tendency to pursue the first flirtation that showed its head were not numerous.

"You really feel, do you," he asked her, as they came towards the park gate, "that I ought to have a try for Mrs. Macdonald?"

"I don't see how you could do better," Miss Marriott replied, with a detached air.

"Ah, well, of course"—he gave an odd little sigh—"I suppose one must be content with the best one can do."

They were at the gate.

"Now, guide," he said, with a pleasant air of comradeship, "having explained to me that this is the Plaza Hotel just opposite, will you arrange about our next meeting, and then put me on my way towards George Douglas, the Brook Club, and a good lunch?"

"I had thought," was the answer, "that perhaps I'd telephone to Hilda and ask if I might come to lunch and bring you. I'd say you'd heard so much about her—you have from me!—and that you wanted to meet her."

"Right," assented Lord Thomas cheerily. "Then we can see whether her ideas on food are sound or not. Everything counts, you know."

A strange, hard race, though agreeable, thought Sally.

* * * * *

Never had a spring passed more pleasantly for Miss Marriott. Had she possessed a fairy wishing-cap, nothing more exactly as she had planned it could have happened. Lord Thomas, just as the penniless nobleman ought, paid immediate court to Hilda. And Hilda seemed to fall head over heels into dear Sally's trap. It must be admitted that people were inclined to be lenient to Mrs. Macdonald. Lord Thomas went about a tremendous lot (in the quiet, rather intimate way that is possible in the New York spring—hastily organised dinners at Sherry's, with the play to follow, motor runs into the country, and so forth), and people liked him, thought him good-looking, pleasant-mannered, and an exceptionally decent sort. But not everyone had Miss Marriott's opportunities for seeing this cheerful blackguard lounging, so to speak, and at his ease. He kept up the rather whimsical notion of her being his guide, philosopher, and friend, came to see her constantly, consulted with her as to all his social movements, and talked of Mrs. Macdonald with incredible frankness. Really, it had to be admitted, for unblushing, cheery worldliness, he and Hilda were a pair hard to beat.

There was one episode, indeed, which, as she remembered it, seemed to Miss Marriott almost fabulous. In the researches he was constantly making, so he told her, into Mrs. Macdonald's financial standing and the condition of her property, Lord Thomas had discovered, so he alleged, that Hilda owned a considerable tract of unimproved, almost woodland property up in the northern end of Manhattan, in those mysterious two and three hundredth streets which lie beyond Van Cortlandt Park. And he actually insisted on Sally's going with him, one May afternoon, to inspect this land. The thing was preposterous and it was incorrect, incidentally. But the brazen impudence of it attracted her, and a warm wind and blue skies made the thought of green things welcome. It was a day for lambs to gambol on soft pastures and for human creatures to be glad, because spring was here. Lord Thomas, even if he was a rascal, was an agreeable one. And it was impossible to be angry with him, as with infectious gaiety, combined with incredible shrewdness and practicality, he planned to lay out streets and avenues, cut boulevards and parkways, prepared to make the land immediately income-producing. His effrontery even went so far as to call a lovely, leafy path which wound around a tiny hill of pine trees "Sally's Alley" or "Marriott Lane." There he had to be checked, but it was not difficult. They went along the grassy way, and his spirits grew calmer, and he seemed to forget the original purpose of the expedition. They sat down in a little, open patch where violets grew, and as she picked them, she found him talking of his earlier days. He was a younger son, and though he touched on this with the greatest restraint and only in passing, she felt that he had had a time of feeling the uselessness, the absurdity of such a position, unless one made for oneself a place in the world. He had gone out to North Australia, had been there for some years engaged in a big project for irrigation. He made vivid for her the wild, ugly country, the curious scattered and degraded remnants of the aborigines, and the humours of the motley advance guard which England had sent to conquer the desert. Those were his best years, thought the girl, as she looked at him. Those were the conditions that might have made him indeed a man. Even now there was strength in him, a kind of a shadow of competence and self-reliance, the hint, beneath the lightness and the easy London manners, of a personality which might have made one proud to know him, proud even that he was content to lie on the grass at one's feet and seem happy. How had it happened, she could not but ask herself, that he had been what he was in those years, and was now just a self-confessed adventurer, prowling the world for some woman's fortune? Perhaps—she was making excuses now for him—some great blow. some complete failure



"'I've even time to sit down quietly and talk it over.'"

of these Antipodean enterprises, had disheartened him.

"Then you left Australia and came home?"

"Yes, two years ago."

"Hadn't you," she asked almost timidly, "hadn't you done well—succeeded, there?"

He was silent for a moment. A dozen violets or so he gathered and gave to her in a little cluster.

"I?" he said at last. "Oh, I'd done as well, I suppose, as a fellow like me can expect to do. Not so well," and he smiled at her, "as I hope to do now, thanks to you."

She turned away, and for an instant she had an uncomfortable feeling that she wanted to cry. But that passed, and she started down "her alley"—he persisted in calling it that.

"Thank you for talking to me about Australia," she said at last. "I think I like that side of you best."

"I want you to like all sides of me," he answered promptly. "You're her great friend, and if I can pull it off, I hope we'll see a lot of you."

He was, you can see, that kind of blackguard. You couldn't quite help liking him. You couldn't quite help wishing that you could do something for him.

As to Hilda, just as the plot had been that she should, she confessed to facing the problem of what she should do when he proposed. And on this point, Sally, as double-dealing as she had planned to be, often sat for hours in counsel with her. Just as had been hoped, Hilda's flimsy Americanism wobbled, like a tower of tissue paper. She began to meditate upon the exact shade of social distinction conferred upon one in England by marriage with the third son of a marquis the creation of whose title was in 1349. Perhaps a change might be a good thing for her. She had always been a good deal liked by foreigners (of course, Englishmen rather than those horrid Huns—this for Sally), and perhaps really she might be happier over there. Hilda indulged in no sentimental passages. Indeed, she even coloured the picture of herself as a hard, brilliant, worldly woman. But she was handsomer in her dark way than ever, and glowed, somehow, with coming triumph. That she might, if she chose to let a softer light come into those great eyes for a favoured man, be very alluring to him, Miss Marriott could not deny.

Sally had wished to bring about a thoroughly worldly marriage, to display to the world a horrid example of the foolish American mated to the unprincipled adventurer—and this, so it appeared, she would accomplish. Yet somehow, she told herself, it had happened so easily that some of the pleasure in it was gone. She herself was growing a little pale, a little nervous as the spring wore on. At this time a letter came to her from Mrs. Natting in London. From it is extracted the following passage, of some importance.

"I'm glad you've been seeing something of Tom de Courtenay, as you wrote me. Isn't it funny, since you met at my house? Isn't it nice too? Tom is the greatest dear, Sally. He's one of my very most special pets. I for one would be terribly glad if—I'd give you my blessing. But, then, my dear, I begin to despair of you. Besides, I remember how the eagle screams when you talk of marriage. Well, I'm glad enough I took Jack, even though he is English—but you know that already. It might be an argument with you, but I suppose it isn't. Hilda Macdonald has written me about Tom, a letter with a lot of questions; I'm answering it by the same mail. Is he a *prétendant?* Do tell me! And I like you so much better than Hilda, Sally. Why did you ever let her have him? Because I know if you'd tried. . . .

"You've made one of the usual mistakes, however. There are two Thomas de Courtenays. There is a baronetcy that has come down in a branch of cousins, so there is a Sir Thomas de Courtenay as well as our Lord Thomas. I know the other Tom. He has a plentiful supply of the de Courtenay charm, and I like him in spite of everything. But he hasn't a penny, and I really believe he's a rascal. It was he who tried so hard at Biarritz to marry the Waterman girl. Fortunately she had too much good sense. I dare say he's been after a hundred others since.

"And you've been thinking my Tom was poor! Hasn't he ever told you about the wonderful things he did in North Australia? Of course, he wouldn't tell you about the equally wonderful fortune he made out there—he's too much of a gentleman. But I should have thought someone would have known. For I'm sure he told me he was going out to New York to put some big deal through.

"I talked to him a lot about you the moment I knew that he was going, so even if he hadn't guessed it that once at Biarritz,

he knew what a dear you are. I'd hoped—— Oh, that Hilda!"

At this point there was enough of this letter for Miss Marriott; there will perhaps be for the reader. Conflicting emotions battled within her, and she stifled indoors. To escape, to think things out, she called the dog Niggles and started forth across the Park.

Pale lavender wistaria hung in thick masses from the pergolas, the grass was greener than it had been in April, the world looked an even happier, lovelier place than it had then. But if he were successful, rich, then he loved Hilda? This was all poor Sally could think of. She grew hot with shame as she thought how she had insulted him at the very outset, and how gently he had borne with her. She grew cold as she thought of Hilda's projects, and the loveless marriage she had helped to precipitate him into. Hilda would give him so little of herself, while he was giving her so much. How much he had to give, Sally seemed to see now for the first time. All the impulses she herself had felt to admire him, to like him, were right impulses, impulses she had tried to stifle because of some silly, half-remembered gossip of Biarritz, because of this impertinent theory of hers that he was a mere adventurer. She had made a thoroughly miserable mess of things. There was nothing now she could do which would seem decent, honourable, loyal to anyone. In spite of herself, a few tears came. She wiped them away, however, and in a trembling voice made a little joke for the dog Niggles. Then she rounded a little curve that brought the path into the sun and by the edge of the brimming lake. And—the dispensations of Providence are always strange, and when one is young and sad, sometimes the pale shadows of events come back like a minor refrain in the tune we dance to—then she saw him again, ahead of her, sitting on the same bench.

"I've heard from Mrs. Natting," she said hurriedly. "I apologise, that's all I can do now. She told me about your cousin, Sir Thomas, and Miss Waterman. I've been a beast, and I can't say how good I think you've been."

"I don't mind at all," he replied gently, "I knew some time all that would be cleared up. Meanwhile I've had my reward."

Miss Marriott was still pale. But she held her head bravely.

"You've come to love her very much."

"Yes," he answered gravely.

"I'm glad! I should like you to know that I always found it hard to believe that you would do it just for the money alone."

"No." He was scratching meditatively at the gravel with his stick. "No, I wouldn't want ever to marry unless I were very much in love and unless the girl were in love at least a little too. Guide, can you tell me whether the girl I care for cares for me at all?"

"I wish you wouldn't ask me. You mustn't." She spoke nervously.

"But I've asked already."

"Whatever I do seems wrong."

"Whatever you do—well, at least I won't blame you. You see, you're responsible for me, and you mustn't throw up your job like this. You were to show me New York and find me a wife."

"What does it matter?" the girl spoke slowly. "If she doesn't love you now, she probably will come to. You are a very good sort, Lord Thomas. And she is a good sort too. I think I misjudge her sometimes. You love her and she is very beautiful. I think you must ask her to marry you, though, on honour, I can't say now that she loves you. There," she went on, and the tears stood in her eyes, "you have the truth. And I've behaved to Hilda like a beast and a coward. If she knew, she would never forgive me, and she would be right. I never thought I should do anything like this."

"She need never know," he said. "I thought you guessed that it was a joke about her. I really never went to see her so very often. I only told you I did, and you started the rumour that I was very *épris*. Perhaps you almost made her believe so. And—perhaps you'd like to know—that land we went to see beyond Van Cortlandt Park belongs to a fat man named Meyerstein. I was thinking of putting some money in it myself. It's you. You must understand now."

Startled blue eyes looked at him. A great wave of colour flooded her cheeks, and like a lightning flash a look that seemed of happiness passed over her face. Then the tears came again, and the blue almost darkened in pain.

"Does it hurt you to know, dear?" he asked. "I want you to marry me, to come back to England with me. Even with all these foolish games, we have got on so well, why shouldn't it be for always? You said you liked me and that I was a good sort. Can't you say you care a little more? I don't ask that you care as much as I do." His eyes rested on her with a light within them—"that seems almost impossible."

He waited an instant.

"There must be some answer, dear."

"I think we could never forget that we began all wrong," she said at last slowly. "I've not seemed to think much of you until Mrs. Natting writes me that you are rich and not an adventurer. Then I try to keep you from Hilda. And then—if I took you myself, think of the horrible things people could say about me, and think that they would be true."

"Has Mrs. Macdonald been in the habit of saying horrible things about you?"

"She——" the memory rushed over her and she blushed hotly. And then—for her sense of humour still lived—in spite of herself, she laughed. "She—she said I was always after foreigners and could never catch one."

"And that we know isn't true." His laugh came gaily. "Listen, you'd marry me if I were my Cousin Tom."

"Oh, perhaps I should!" cried the girl; "that would be easier, don't you see?"

"You love me!" He caught both her hands in his, and in spite of herself she looked straight into his eyes—competent, glad, masterful, blue eyes. "You love me!"

Her head dropped.

"Perhaps I do," she whispered. "But that doesn't matter. I can't——"

"Listen," he said. "I see all your scruples. I understand. Now I mean to marry you. I love you, and nothing can persuade me that if you marry me it will be for my money."

"Why, I told you that very first time," she faltered, "that I'm poor and that I must marry for money."

"You just can't tell the truth, can you, sweetheart?" he answered her, smiling. "I want you to marry for money, so long as its my money and there's plenty of it. You see, I just decline to believe bad things about you. I trust you absolutely. Haven't I seen what you felt about what you thought I was going to do? I want no other guarantee. If you'll just say 'I care,' I'll believe you. You know yourself I could. And your scruples, your doubts, why, I'll argue you out of them in half an hour, and we will be happy ever afterwards."

This was eleven-thirty. She whispered something to him. By twelve the doubts were argued away.

LEAVETAKING.

GREEN turf outspread beneath your gossamer sheet,
The sunrise mist on every blade is wet;
The chrism of your dews has bathed my feet
Where yellow hawkweeds star the silvered net;
Yet Earth beloved, green grass and yellow weed,
Whether I come or go,
You will not know,
You will not heed.

Dark water-pool upon the crimsoning heath,
Rimmed with tall reeds and orange asphodel,
Skimmed by blue dragon-flies with steel-bright sheath,
On your smooth glass my mirrored image fell;
But, O dark water and brown flowering reed,
Whether I come or go,
You will not know,
You will not heed.

O Earth beloved, woodways my footsteps trod,
Mauve scabious fields, in twilight of warm rain,
Bronze leaves that carpet all the beechgrove sod,
Deep mosses where to-day my lips have lain;
The berries redden, drops the ripened seed,
But if I come or go,
You will not know,
You will not heed.

UNA ARTEVELDE TAYLOR.

THE SECRET OF DISCIPLINE.

By BARRY PAIN.

MR. ERNEST WILLIS was an excellent and conscientious young man. He was a Bachelor of Arts. But he had not invented gunpowder; he had his limitations.

Upon taking his degree, he decided to become a schoolmaster. This was less because he loved teaching than because he knew of nothing else which he could do. The modest honorarium which he would earn in this way, added to his still more modest private means, would allow him to live in moderate comfort, provided he abstained from marriage and other excesses. The chief charm of the scholastic profession for the young man of moderate attainments is that it gives one thirteen weeks' holiday in the year; if it had fifty-one weeks' holiday in the year, it would be almost attractive. To men of Ernest Willis's calibre the work is often arduous and unpleasant, the remuneration is miserable, and the prospect of being unemployed and not wanted at forty is fairly certain. But Ernest Willis had little knowledge or imagination.

Being conscientious, he began to read books on education. He devoted special study to the question of discipline. It soon became evident to him that there was plenty of good advice to be obtained. The authorities did not agree in the least, but every theory (so long as it was taken by itself) seemed quite sound.

Mr. Ernest Willis was exceptionally fortunate. In three months he had found a situation. The salary of £70 was small, but in addition he was well housed and well fed. It was probably more than he was worth. The proprietorial head-master, the Rev. James Millen, seemed to have some of the qualities of a gentleman, and was not agressively narrow in his views. He made a few mistakes, perhaps, but rarely in his manners and never in his accounts. The only other resident master, Whitcombe, a rather fat man of thirty, seemed a very decent fellow. The school prepared for the public schools and for certain examinations. It was quite a small school, and the pupils (as the agents had informed Ernest) were all the sons of gentlemen. They must, further, have been the sons of gentlemen who enjoyed paying too much for things.

Whitcombe and Willis dined together in Whitcombe's sitting-room on the first night of term, and smoked Willis's cigars afterwards.

"And," said Whitcombe, "you're lucky to be here. There was nothing princely about the dinner we've just eaten, and our rooms are not palaces. But we're fairly comfortable, and better treated than half the assistant masters in private schools. This place was my third attempt, so I know something about it. I've been here six years, and here I mean to stop. There are things which one doesn't like: I bar the two services on Sunday, and old Millen might give us a little more time off duty. But it's heaven to the other places I was at."

Willis questioned and heard horrid details of those other places—of prohibited smoking, of rooms unfit for habitation, of food that would have been rejected in the kitchen, of dirt and mean-souled avarice.

"Why did my predecessor leave here?"

"Poor old Pirley—he got sacked. He wasn't half a bad sort, but he couldn't get on with the boys. They played Old Harry with him. He hadn't the slightest control over them."

"I see," said Ernest. "I'm not any too sure about myself; I come here without any actual experience. I suppose you're a good disciplinarian."

"I don't know that I ever thought about it. I get on all right with the young devils."

"If you could give me some hints about discipline, I'd be very glad of the——"

But Whitcombe modestly declined. Probably, in three days' time, Willis would know as much about it as he did—or more.

Willis spoke of the different authorities on education whose works he had consulted, but Whitcombe knew nothing of any of them, and did not seem to respect them greatly. His knowledge of London theatres and

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restaurants was fairly comprehensive, and he found them a more interesting subject of discussion. "I always spend the holidays in town," said Whitcombe. "I consider that I am dead for thirty-nine weeks in the year, in order that I may live for the other thirteen." He did not seem discontented; he was fat and philosophical; but Ernest Willis decided that Whitcombe, pleasant man though he was, was sadly wanting in a serious interest in his educational work.

Boys, as a rule, treat the new master kindly for the first day or two; they regard him as being on probation, and wish to see what can be done with him. Therefore, on the first day Ernest Willis had an opportunity of studying the methods of Mr. Millen and of Mr. Whitcombe, in order to ascertain how discipline might be maintained. Mr. Millen was quiet and incisive in his manner, and was occasionally satirical. Discipline was perfect in his class, and Ernest decided that he had now got the secret. However, the next hour brought Whitcombe into the class-room. Whitcombe roared like a bull of Bashan, taught like a whirlwind, was frequently abusive and never satirical. And the discipline in his class was just as perfect. Ernest felt much less sure about that secret. Of the two he decided that probably Whitcombe got more work out of his class.

"I think I got on all right to-day," said Ernest at dinner that night.

"Good," said Whitcombe. "They aren't a bad lot of young devils really. Poor old Pirley irritated them—that's why they went for him."

"That Dickon seems a bright young chap; nice-mannered too."

"He's clever," said Whitcombe, "and we ought to do jolly well with him if we can keep him. But probably he'll be taken away for the last year, and some infernal crammer will get the credit for our work. He's a chap to mark; for if he doesn't give you trouble, the rest won't, and *vice versa*. Jove! There's the bell, and it's my prep., the first week."

A little later Ernest went down to the double class-room where preparation was held, to ask Whitcombe a question about the time-schedule. He found Whitcombe in a comfortable but undignified position in an easy-chair, reading a novel and making not the slightest attempt at supervision. Yet every boy in the room was working, and all were quiet and orderly. As a matter of fact, Whitcombe was merely reaping the excellent crop which he had previously sown. He could afford now to be quite passive.

But Ernest was staggered, and came rather rashly to the conclusion that there was nothing in it—anybody could manage boys.

II.

THREE days later, the boys were in the habit of speaking of Mr. Willis as Ernest. When boys speak of a master by his first name, it is either a very good sign or a very bad sign; if the name is Ernest, it is a very bad sign. Nicknames are another matter; some of the most effective masters have uncomplimentary nicknames.

"Dear Ernest is getting above himself," said Dickon. "He's going to report me to the Milliner. Thus inevitably was the Rev. James Millen designated by his pupils.

"What was the row?" asked a sympathiser.

"We'd had a few words, starting with the Ovid appointed for the day, and dear little Ernest got a bit flustered. He told me to sit down and go out of the room. It wasn't for me to argue. Then when I did try to go out of the room in a sitting position, he said I was insolent. Three more got their town-leave stopped for loud and vulgar laughter. We'd a giddy time with him, and I don't mind betting that as soon as it's his week for prep., there'll be a still giddier time."

"He's like old Pearly-gates." Thus irreverently had the recent Mr. Pirley been known.

"And we'll do so to him and more also," said Dickon, who used in a promiscuous and improper way anything which he remembered from the Scripture lesson.

Ernest Willis was a little depressed that night at dinner. "Things aren't going so smoothly," he said. "I had to punish several chaps to-day. As for Dickon, I've reported him to Millen, and Millen has given him no end of a dressing-down."

"Pity you did that," said Whitcombe.

"Why? He was frightfully impertinent. We aren't allowed to thrash them—which was what he really wanted."

"No, one can't do that, except indirectly," said Whitcombe, smiling as if at some reminiscence. "All the same, it's a great mistake to report. It's a confession of weakness. It's equivalent to saying that you can't manage your own business. Boys have no mercy on a master who reports; they regard him as a weakling and a sneak. I would never report a chap myself—except, of course, in the case of one of those offences which mean immediate expulsion, and we've never had any of those."

"I wish to goodness you'd told me all this before, Whitcombe," said Ernest dolefully.

"I wish I had; I don't know that I'd ever thought much about it. I've always dealt with each case as it turned up, as common sense seemed to suggest. But when you asked me for a theory of discipline the



"Mr. Pirley had actually been shut up in the housemaid's cupboard."

other night, upon my soul, I hadn't got one. Thinking it over, I believe it depends a good deal more on what you don't do than on what you do. You must never lose your temper, for instance, though you may pretend to lose it; you must never get confused, never vacillate, never report, never——"

At this moment the bell rang. Whitcombe said the one word with which he always greeted it when it was his night on duty, and went down to take preparation.

Willis was left to the bitterness of his own thoughts. Calm self-examination showed him that he had lost his temper with boys, that he had got confused, that he had vacillated, and that he had reported. Probably he had done all the other things which Whitcombe would have specified as fatal to discipline if the preparation bell had not interrupted him.

Later on in the evening he decided that remorse was the feeling a man had who, remembering what he himself did as a schoolboy, turned schoolmaster. He realised also the awful uselessness of advice. It is easy to tell a man not to lose his temper, not to get confused, and not to vacillate. But if a man is irritated and changes his mind too rapidly or discovers it too slowly, how is he to avoid these disasters?

The next day was a bad day for Ernest Willis, and on the day after, in a fit of temper, he once more told Dickon that he would report him, and afterwards—though he regretted the mistake—was afraid to go back on his word.

"The days of dear Ernest are numbered," proclaimed Dickon to his satellites. "They will be even as the days of Pearly-gates. He'll be shut up in the housemaid's cupboard. Meanwhile, we'll arrange a few treats for his first prep."

Mr. Pirley had actually been shut up in the housemaid's cupboard, had been released by a domestic servant, and had entered the dining-room, somewhat flushed, twenty minutes late for breakfast.

To his dying day Ernest Willis will not forget the night on which he took preparation for the first time. The classroom was really two rooms with a double door between; the seniors sat in one half and the juniors in the other. It was practically impossible to command both rooms at the same moment. It was a bad arrangement, of course, but the house had not originally been designed as a school.

Willis entered with a novel in his hand

and flung himself into the easy-chair in the junior room. The imitation of Whitcombe was perhaps somewhat slavish. There was a minute or two of silence, and then from the senior room came a loud, deep voice—it might possibly have been Dickon's voice, disguised—

"Ernest, stand forth!"

At first Willis could hardly believe his ears. As a piece of cheek this was absolutely monumental. Then he made a dash into the senior room, to discover the culprit if he could, and to inflict terrible punishment as soon as he could decide what punishment to inflict.

And when he entered the senior room, every boy was at work and seemed respectfully surprised to see him. And at the same time there came from the junior room wailings as of despair and cries of "Don't leave us, Ernest! We can't bear it!"

Ernest rushed back to the junior room; and immediately the senior room resumed its stentorian command to Ernest to stand forth.



"The imitation of Whitcombe was perhaps somewhat slavish."

Thus, by a preconceived plan carefully carried out, Ernest was tossed like a distracted human shuttlecock from one room to the other. Boys laughed till the tears rolled down their cheeks. Nobody pretended to do any work. Pandemonium reigned.

But pandemonium makes a good deal of noise, and Whitcombe upstairs heard it. He was not a bad-natured man. He knocked out his pipe, ran downstairs, and entered the class-room. Pandemonium vanished as he opened the door.

Nominally, Mr. Willis, being on duty, was the person in authority, and Whitcombe followed the prescribed etiquette.

"Can you spare Dickon for a few minutes, Mr. Willis? I wish to see him upstairs."

"Certainly," said Mr. Willis. "Dickon, Mr. Whitcombe wants you."

Dickon obeyed with alacrity and wondered what was up.

"Sit down there," said Whitcombe, when they had reached his sitting-room. "I'm going through your last prose with you."

Whitcombe selected the prose from a heap of others. He had not looked at it previously, and Dickon occasionally wrote Latin prose that was by no means bad. This time Whitcombe was not sorry to see at the first glance that Dickon had made a couple of elementary mistakes.

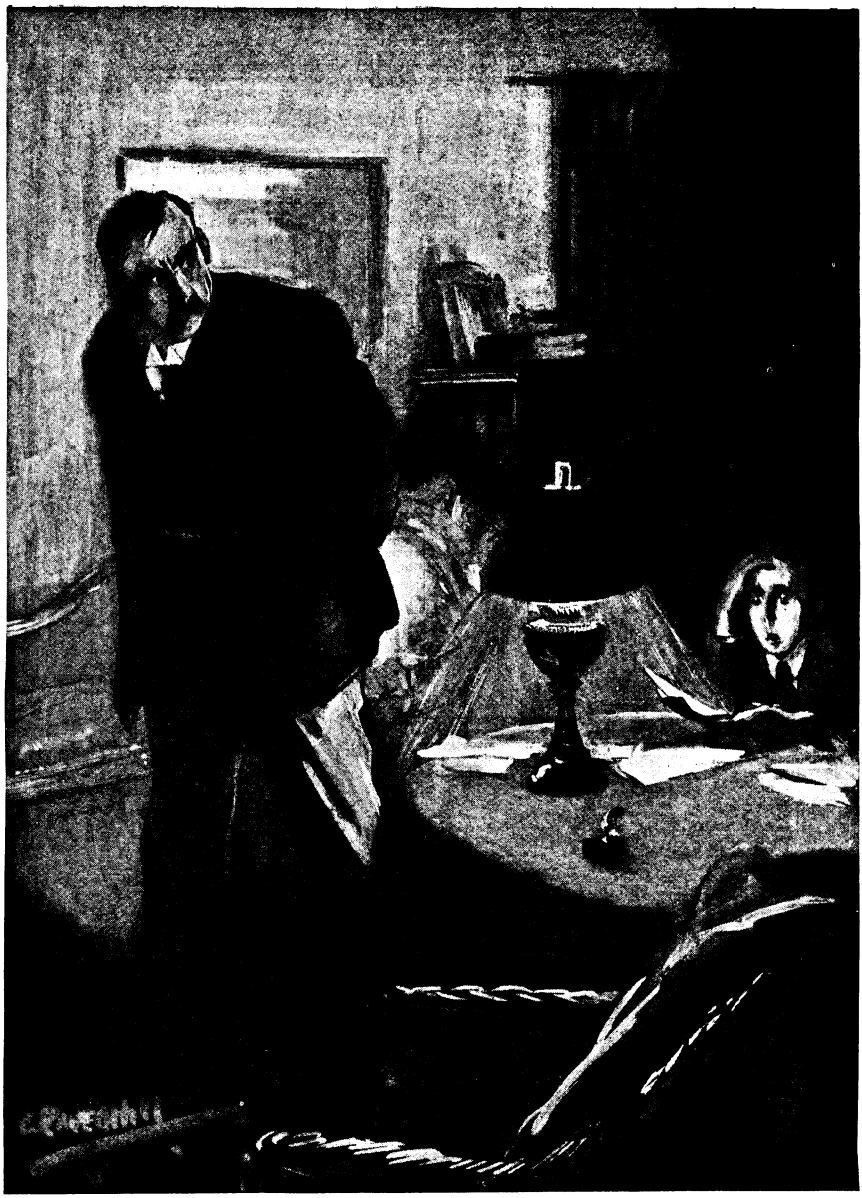
"Take it yourself first and correct the things which you know to be wrong."

Whitcombe paced the room, his hands clenched, his brows contracted. He presented the picture of a man driven, by mistakes in Latin prose, to the verge of murder. And poor Dickon was not aware that Whitcombe did not care one brass farthing about it and was merely doing his best to help Willis.

Dickon breathed hard over the prose. "I'm afraid there's a wrong gender here, sir," he said.

"Afraid? You know. You knew it when you did it. You can't help your want of natural abilities, but you can help mistakes of that kind. And what sort of construction's this? Look at it, booby! Rewrite the whole thing, and give it to me by nine to-morrow."

Whitcombe stormed on and on. Dickon had no longer the immoral support of other sinners as in the room downstairs. He



"He presented the picture of a man driven, by mistakes in Latin prose, to the verge of murder."

became much reduced in spirit. He was conscious that so far he had done no work in preparation, and that there would be more trouble with Whitcombe in the morning. When he went back to the preparation-room, he informed the boys next him that he'd got it right in the neck from Whitcombe, and went to work feverishly. It occurred to other boys that the reckoning would come in the morning, and they also began to prepare work for Mr. Millen and Mr. Whitcombe—but not work for Mr. Willis. However, the thread of rebellion was for the time broken. The room became almost quiet.

"I'm much obliged to you, Whitcombe, for looking in as you did. I simply didn't know what to do with them."

"That's all right, old man," said Whitcombe. "But it's the kind of trick that can't be played twice; they'd smell a rat."

"And I've said I'd report Collins and

Barstow; I was driven to it. Shall I let them off?"

"No. But it's bad, either way. Millen doesn't like too much reporting; looks as if you couldn't keep your end up."

"I suppose I can't. Do you think I'd better resign? It's no good waiting to be fired out."

"No. Give it a chance. You've made a bad start, but you may pull round yet. Millen's bound to make some allowance for want of experience; I'll bet he did when he fixed your salary."

III.

MILLEN did not like so much reporting, and he told Willis so. He had heard the noise in preparation the previous evening, and proposed later in the week to pay the class-room a surprise visit. "That may help you," he said with a sigh, "but it all depends on you in the end, Willis."

The morning's school had convinced Willis that he was no good; no boy had done any work for him, and the only boys who kept quiet during their lesson with him were secretly preparing work for the other masters.

In the afternoon he started out for a depressing walk in the rain. He lingered for a minute watching some inexpert play at single-stick between Dickon and an Irish boy.

"Like a turn, sir?" said Dickon, with a twinkle in his eye. It would be good fun to smack dear Ernest over the legs.

"I don't mind," said Willis, and threw off his mackintosh.

Ten seconds later Dickon was for the first time regarding Ernest as his master. Neither wore any guard, and Willis played very lightly. Dickon found himself tapped here and there, just as often as Willis pleased; his own attack was absolutely futile.

"Now, then—just to finish it," said Willis, and Dickon's stick flew up to the roof.

"My word!" said Dickon. "Never saw anything like it. You let me off jolly easy, sir. Thanks awfully." He picked up Willis's mackintosh for him.

"Well," said Willis, "we are not quite matched as to size"—the difference was not great—"and I've spent a good deal longer over learning that game than you have."

"You must have done. Wish to goodness it was one of the things you taught us here!"

"I'll give you a few hints if you like, one of these days," said Willis, as he struggled with his mackintosh. "You want practice—you're slow."

"Thanks most awfully. That will be ripping. I say, sir, if you wanted anything in the town, the weather's rather beastly, and I'd be very glad to get it for you. I was going down anyhow."



"Watching some inexpert play at single-stick."

"So am I—I want the walk. Come along with me if you like."

"When I first came here, sir," said Dickon, "I had a row with old—I mean, with Mr. Whitcombe. Next day he had a turn at single-stick with me. He's not half as good as you are, but he's a lot better than I am.

And he didn't let me off like you. Worst lamming I ever had in my life. He was smiling all the time, too."

"Ah!" said Willis. "That's what I ought to have done with you."

"Well, I couldn't have grumbled if you had. But—er—that'll be all right, sir," and Dickon, who appeared somewhat embarrassed, changed the subject.

On his return from town, Dickon joined a group in the playground. "I say," said one, incredulous, "Paddy says that dear Ernest is pretty good with a single-stick. It's all poppy-cock, isn't it?"

"It is," said Dickon. "He isn't pretty good. He's absolutely top-hole. I'm going to suck up like fun to get some lessons out of him. Surprise of my life. Did a jolly decent thing, too." Dickon described it. "And this is the first time he's done any schoolmastering—bit green at it; shouldn't wonder if he turned out all right in the end. Anyhow, he's better than old Pearly-gates."

Willis, who was not deeply versed in the mysterious working of boys' minds, received a surprise that evening. Of the organised disorder of the previous evening there was not a trace. Occasionally there was a little talking—more than there would have been if Mr. Whitcombe had been on duty—but Willis found that it ceased as soon as he spoke. The room was perfectly quiet when the Rev. James Millen, noiselessly shod, made one of those silent and dramatic entrances for which among his pupils he was famous—or shall we say notorious? He held a weekly review in one hand.

He followed the prescribed etiquette, Willis being the authority in that room at that time.

"With your permission, Mr. Willis, I should like to look at the work of one or two of my young friends here."

"Certainly, Mr. Millen."

The work was satisfactory. Mr. Millen became genial. He told Dickon an amusing story—at any rate, Dickon and the boys near him were obviously much amused by it. Then he turned to Willis. "Seen this week's *Spectator*, Mr. Willis? An interesting article on the Intelligence of Domestic Fowls." He left the paper with him, and Willis was glad of it, for he had brought no novel down with him, and time was hanging heavily on his hands.

A few weeks later, Whitcombe observed to Willis one night at dinner that he seemed to be getting on all right.

"Not so badly," Willis admitted cheerfully.

"Discovered the secret of discipline—eh?"

"I can keep pretty good order now," said Willis thoughtfully. "All the same, if anybody asked me what the secret of discipline was, I couldn't tell him."

"No," said Whitcombe. "No more could I. No more could Millen."

The bell rang out loudly.

"Jove!" said Whitcombe perfunctorily. It was his night on duty.

WHEN I AM DEAD.

WHEN I am dead, I would not have you weep
Or wring the long pale blossoms of your hands,
Because I left you for the twilight lands
To wait till you shall rouse me from that sleep.

When I am dead, I would not have you pass
With flower-filled arms to deck my resting-place;
I only ask to know your dear flower face
Shines on above me through the dusky grass.

ARCHIBALD SULLIVAN.

AT OLD YARD FARM.

By DOROTHEA BARRETT.

"I'M sorry to say they ain't honest cats, miss," says Mrs. Baker, with a severe glance at the four cats seated sedately on the mats outside the "parlour."

"*Dis*honest cats they are, the lot of 'em, kittens and all. It's astonishing, miss, how a cat will learn a kitten to steal. Only yesterday our old Tom"—Tom is the small outside dog who lives in a barrel in the farmyard—"he mostly has biscuit to eat, but he's getting old, you know, miss, and he does love a little bit of something else, poor old dear, so I got him a nice little feed in the saucepan and put it outside to cool for him; but, if you'll believe me, them cats went and got the lid off. How they managed it, I don't know, or which of 'em it was done it, but I dare say they all shared a bit; and when I come to get it for poor old Tom, the saucepan was empty as could be. Ah, *very* dishonest cats they are. But, there, as I always says, Tom ain't one to stand up for himself. He's one of them as is bound to be put on."

Mackenzie has thought this out for himself very early in his acquaintance with Tom. He has found that if he advances with a threatening aspect, Thomas retreats carefully behind Mrs. Baker, leaving Mackenzie free to take away Thomas's best bone, his oldest, dearest bone. In vain is he rebuked for thus oppressing an older, smaller, and, as Theodora reminds him, a captive dog. Mackenzie has no scruples. "He shall take who has the power, and he shall keep who can," is evidently his motto.

He careers gaily away across the meadow with much waving of a plumed triumphant tail, leaving Tom without his bone, grovelling and cringing as if he were going to be killed "immediately, if not before."

"What kind of dog is Tom? I'm sure I couldn't say, miss," says Mrs. Baker dubiously. "The lady who give him to me as a puppy told me that if he turned out better than she expected by the looks of him, she would come and buy him back from me; but she never did."

Looking at Thomas, the listeners are scarcely surprised. Most of him seems to be a wire-haired fox-terrier; but then there is his nose, black, blunt, upturned; and his mouth—the mouth of a bull-dog, with teeth fiercely showing.

It is hard to say off-hand what kind of dog Thomas is. All the same, there is something about him rather attractive; his ways are silly, his cowardice is shocking, but his eyes are soft and brown, and he has an appealing way with his paw which makes it difficult to snub him.

The sun is shining brilliantly, the rain is pouring down, and a double rainbow, gorgeous and glorious, is arching right over the house. The birds are singing, and there is a faint clicking sound, which steadily continues. Looking about, the three find a big thrush hammering the shell of a large snail against a convenient stone.

This, then, is the meaning of the many crushed and battered snail-shells with which the path is continually strewn.

The birds sing on, the rain stops, the rainbow glows more and more vividly, and gradually fades away, and the thrush goes on earnestly bashing the snail against the stone—an interesting sight, though a sad process for the snail. However, as Theodora says, "Such is life."

Theodora has been several times into the village, and Euphemia and Leonora have been puzzled to understand how she has managed to find her way unassisted. At last she confesses to them that it is entirely due to what she calls her sign-post, her white linen sign-post. It appears that at the turning—there are two roads, and one leads to the farmhouse—every evening at the same time, the time at which Theodora is careful to pass, there may be seen outside his thatched cottage, smoking his pipe in the cool of the evening, an aged man in a white linen suit.

Him Theodora regards as her sign-post, and it is due to his unconscious guidance that three times she has safely passed and repassed. She acknowledges that were he one evening to vanish, she would be quite

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"All in black satin coats and white waistcoats."

lost. How then she would find her way, she knows not at all, having no more idea of it than she had the first time, although it is but a short quarter of an hour's walk.

As usual with country-folk, Mrs. Baker's directions have been of the vaguest.

"You just go straight along, miss, till you come to one of them what I call 'squeezers.' I can't get through 'em myself," laughs Mrs. Baker comfortably. "Ain't been able to for some time."

"Squeezers" are two posts that curve together in the centre like an hour-glass, to prevent the cattle from straying through.

"After you get through the second one, you just circle round——"

"Circle round?" asks Theodora blankly. Small need to instruct Theodora to circle round when she is in an unknown locality.

"Just circle round, miss, and then just cross the third field; and then you see the post-office right down the lane, as you look straight down. Well, leastways, it ain't exactly straight down, because it turns a bit just at the bottom, but you'll see it all right down the lane."

In the quaint and sleepy little village nothing seems doing, only on the telegraph wires, all in a double row, facing towards the little inn, are sitting thirty-six swallows, all in black satin coats and white waistcoats. Opposite are many nests built under the eaves of the old-fashioned houses of which the village is full, and from these nests peep here and there small black and white velvet heads.

It is practice night, and their mothers are teaching them to fly. And it is just a long enough journey to and fro, to and fro, from the wires, for young, uncertain wings, so that they may safely return to rest in the little mud nests beneath the roofs.

The Grumpy Dog who lives at the butcher's shop is sitting as usual bolt upright outside his own door, and when the three try to make friends with him, replies as usual with deep, deep, thundering growls, hair bristling, and eyes flashing blue sparks of lightning.

* * * * *

It rains, rains, rains.

The ground is soaked, the little stream opposite is quite a briskly flowing little river. The wind howls, the rose bushes sway, and the trees bend.

The orchard is strewn with branches and twigs, and on the drenched grass the apples lie in quantities. The beautiful field of oats already cut and "stooked" lies sodden and beaten out.

Mrs. Baker, seriously contemplating the leaden sky, replies to Leonora's impatient implorings that "it *must* be fine soon, surely?" that it looks to her "very keep on, very keep on indeed."

The brown and white cow, with the long, melancholy, foolish face, has retreated to the shelter of her barn. It is a small shed with a thatched roof, and an open doorway with a bar across. Through the bar she has put her head, and meditatively munching, munching, she looks across to the three who are sitting at their window hopelessly watching the ceaseless, ceaseless rain. Evidently, by her expression, she also thinks that it looks "very keep on" and she has no intention of emerging from her shelter, and the three look back at her, sorrowfully apprehending that of going out again to-night there is not the smallest little hope.

Euphemia gives a patient sigh. She foresees an evening devoted alternately to the hearing of Theodora's last story, and to the discussion of "Augustus." Augustus is Leonora's latest. She says he has "such beautiful eyes."

In the yard Thomas is crying piteously all to himself, and when Mrs. Baker goes out to see what is the matter, is found sitting outside in the pelting rain, whilst his barrel is crowded with hens and chickens taking refuge from the storm, he having twisted his chain so short that he cannot get back to turn them out. Evidently Thomas is one to be put upon.

On the rail in front of the window are three small yellow feathers that blow drearily to and fro in the wind and the rain. They are the remains of Martha, the yellow hen that gardened in the front garden. A fox came in the night and took her quite away. Theodora, waking, heard a curious sound, a sort of whining howl, like and yet unlike that of a dog. Not like the voice of Thomas, which, indeed, is never heard at night. Thomas apparently sleeps more soundly than anyone, although spoken of as the Watch Dog. Thomas must watch very silently.

When they arose in the morning, those three small feathers pathetically caught on the rail were all that was left of Martha.

Mrs. Baker says she was as good a hen for bringing up chickens as you could find, one that didn't take 'em walking too far, walking them, as Mrs. Baker expresses it, off their little legs. Many a time she says she has felt real sorry for Martha, when she set her down for weeks on a new lot of eggs, but Martha was keen and interested in them always.

Never again will she garden in the front bed of stocks, scattering the pansies and geraniums and making the soil fly in her energy for her yellow chicks.

The wind howls on, the rain soaks down, the dusk is falling.

"I do wonder about Augustus," says Leonora in a soft and sentimental voice.

"I shouldn't," replies Theodora with a faint yawn.

"Shouldn't what?" asks Leonora rather sharply.

"Shouldn't wonder about Augustus," returns Theodora.



"'I do wonder about Augustus.'"

THE BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL.

BY E. A. BAUGHAN.

THE Birmingham Musical Festival, which takes place on the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th of October, will not give the curious amateur many new works, but that fact will probably make no difference in the attendance, since new music has no great attraction for the ordinary lover of the art. "Elijah"—what would a Birmingham Festival be without Mendelssohn's masterpiece?—"Judas Maccabæus," Berlioz's "Faust," Brahms's "Song of Destiny," Cherubini's "Mass in C," Dvorák's "Stabat Mater," and Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius," are well enough known, it is true, but they will be none the less welcome when sung by the Birmingham choir. A couple of novelties by composers intimately connected with the musical life of Birmingham practically exhaust the list of new works. The second part of Professor Granville Bantock's "Omar Khayyam" will be heard for the first time at Birmingham, and the third part will be an absolute novelty. Mr. Rutland Boughton, whose "A Song at Midnight" is the other important new composition, is a young musician who has for some time done good work in Birmingham and its district, and is a professor at the musical section of the Midland Institute, of which Professor Bantock is the chief. The composer of "Omar Khayyam" is too well known to need any introduction to the readers of the WINDSOR MAGAZINE, but it may be well to remind them that he was quite recently appointed to the Chair of Music in the Birmingham University, which was relinquished by Sir Edward Elgar owing to ill-health.

The chorus-master, Mr. R. H. Wilson, has done so well since his appointment to the Birmingham Festival, that the singing may be expected to have improved even upon the standard of the last Festival. Of the singers taking part in the present Festival, it is noticeable that all are in the very prime of their career. Mr. George Henschel is the only singer who may be called a veteran, but his recent singing in London has proved that he is one of those artists who refuse to grow old. Mmes. Perceval Allen, Donalda, Agnes Nicholls, and Gleeson White make a brilliant band of sopranos, and where could finer contraltos be found than Mmes. Ada Crossley, Kirby Lunn, and Phyllis Lett? Mr. John Coates, Mr. John Harrison, and Mr. Walter Hyde are the tenors, and Mr. Frederick Austin, Mr. Dalton Baker, Mr. George Henschel, and Mr. Robert Radford the baritones and basses. It is quite unnecessary to do more than name these singers, for each is well known as a competent artist. Indeed, one



Photo by [*Elliott & Fry.*

SIR EDWARD ELGAR.

is impressed by the fact in reading over this list that the singers engaged for the Birmingham Festival are remarkable for their artistic intelligence as well as for their vocal powers. Perhaps it is a sign of the times that a representative body of the younger school of singers should impress us with that fact. Also it may be noticed that all are of British blood with the exception of Mme. Donalda, who is a French-Canadian. Mme. Ada Crossley is an Australian, and for all purposes that is being of native blood. The programme of the Festival, too, gives special prominence to works by native composers. Indeed, there is no novelty by a foreign musician.

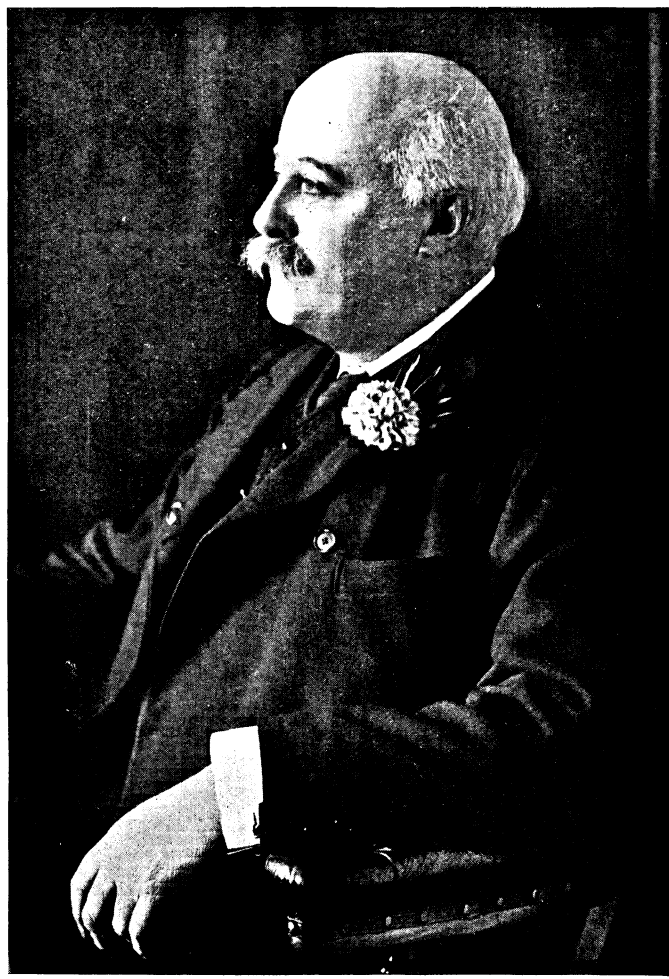


Photo by] *Lafayette, New Bond Street.*

SIR C. HUBERT PARRY.

The Birmingham Festival owes its origin, as most of these musical meetings do, to the cause of charity. In 1768, the funds for the completion and equipment of the Birmingham General Hospital not having reached the amount expected by Dr. John Ash and those who were interested in the establishment of the hospital, it was resolved to organise a musical entertainment as a means of increasing them. Every document concerning this first Festival has been lost, but an advertisement in *Aris's Gazette* runs as follows—

"On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the 7th, 8th and 9th September, the oratorios L'ALLEGRO, &c., ALEXANDER'S FEAST and the MESSIAH will be performed here.

L'ALLEGRO, & IL PENSEROSO,

Will be at the Theatre in King Street, on Wednesday Evening, the 7th Inst.

And ALEXANDER'S FEAST,

On Thursday Evening, the 8th.

Between the several Parts of which Mr. Pinto will play a Solo; and Concertos will be introduced by the other Performers, on their several Instruments.

On Thursday Morning will be performed in St. Philip's Church, at Ten O'Clock, Mr. Handel's Grand TE DEUM and JUBILATE, with an anthem of Dr. Boyce's, suitable to the Occasion, and Mr. Handel's celebrated CORONATION ANTHEM;

And the MESSIAH, or SACRED ORATORIO, At the same place on Friday Morning, the 9th.

On the Wednesday and Thursday evenings, after the Oratorios, will be a Ball, at Mrs. Sawyer's, in the Square."

The custom of holding balls as part of the entertainment held good for several of the

Birmingham Festivals, but any such attempt to relieve the monotony of a modern musical festival would receive but scant encouragement. This first Festival, by the way, was conducted by an Englishman, Mr. Capel Bond, of Coventry, whose trumpet concerto opened the Thursday morning performance. The conductor's name certainly appears in this advertisement, but it was unusual, and it was not until 1805 that the conductor was actually named as being of importance. Thomas Greatorex, a favourite with George III. and the Prince Regent, had already been conductor of the Festivals since 1796. With the exception of the 1808 and 1811 Festivals, directed respectively by Dr. Crotch and S. Wesley, Greatorex conducted until his death. He was succeeded by William Knyvett, who conducted the Festivals from 1834 until 1843, assisted by Thomas Munden, who was a pupil of Greatorex and the first organist of the Birmingham Town Hall. The Chevalier Newkomm, whose "David" was such a fiasco in 1834, was the first foreign musician who appeared in Birmingham as conductor. At the next Festival Mendelssohn conducted his "St. Paul"; in 1840 and 1846 he appeared again, the intermediate Festival being conducted by Knyvett and Munden alone. In 1849 the reign of the foreign conductor at the Birmingham Festival began with the appointment of Costa to the post, and has lasted to the present Festival. As Dr. Richter, who succeeded Costa in 1885, has already intimated his intention of retiring from active work as conductor in a not very distant future, it is to be hoped that the post will once more be given to a British musician.



Photo by] PROFESSOR GRANVILLE BANTOCK. [*Elliott & Fry.*

While on the subject of the conductorship of the Birmingham Festival it may be interesting to relate Costa's first connection with the Festival. In 1829 a new work by Nicola Zingarelli was to be performed. Zingarelli was an Italian composer of great note in his day and a prolific writer of sacred compositions (he is said to have composed no less than thirty-eight Masses for male voices, twenty solemn Masses, seven Masses for double choir, sixty-six Masses with organ, twenty-five Masses with orchestra, four Requiems, twenty-one Credos, many Te Deums, seventy-three Magnificats, and twenty-eight Stabat Maters). The composer, then seventy-seven years of age, was too old to travel to England, and therefore sent his pupil, Michael Costa, to conduct the composition, "Super Flumina Babylon." The committee, however, would have nothing to do with the young, unknown musician, and even refused to pay his bare expenses unless he sang certain pieces in the programme. Costa, who was a tenor, sang with Miss F. Ayton in two scenes, "in character," from "La Donna del Lago;" in Zingarelli's cantata; in a quartet, and also gave several solos. Critics were not tame in those days. One report said: "The singer was little, if at all, better than the composition. Both, in a word, failed." A writer in the *Harmonicon* was even more severe: "As a singer he is

far below mediocrity, and he does not compensate for his vocal deficiencies by his personal address, which is abundantly awkward." Perhaps young Costa may have resolved to be revenged on Birmingham; if so, his ambition was amply realised.

To return to the first Birmingham Festival, it should be said the streets were "lighted from the Play-house to the Ball-room," and that on the Thursday the Countesses of Dartmouth and Aylesford "very obligingly stood to receive at the Church door" contributions for the benefit of the charity. The entertainments produced £800, of which £299 7*s.* 4*d.* was handed to the Hospital funds. It should be added that the band only numbered twenty-five and the chorus but forty. The next Festival took place in 1778, and the programme was again entirely Handelian.

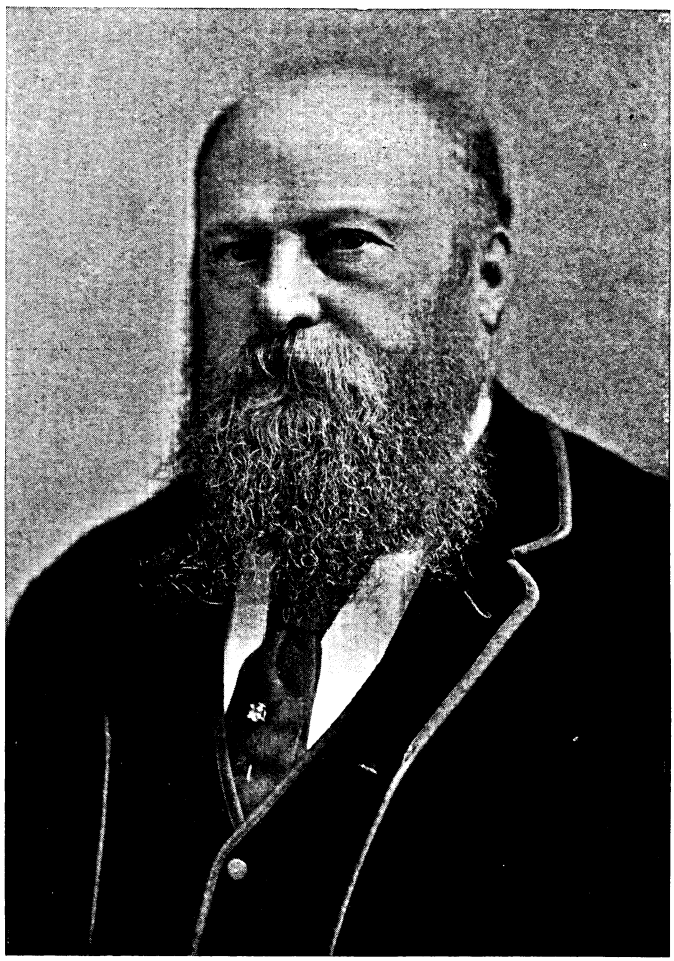


Photo by] [*Elliott & Fry.*

DR. HANS RICHTER.

These two meetings were the precursors of the Birmingham Triennial Festivals, the first of which took place in 1784, and have continued to this day, except on two occasions. In 1793 trade was bad, the nation was suffering from heavy taxation, and war was occupying the public mind. Moreover, the theatre was destroyed by fire, and thus the committee had no place in which the evening concerts could be held. After the Festival of 1829 there was a lapse of five years, owing to the change from St. Philip's Church to the new Town Hall. The programme of the 1784 Festival was more varied, and included Purcell's Te Deum and Jubilate and a new oratorio, "Goliah," by Luffman Atterbury, a well-known glee-writer. This composition was recommended to the committee by the Steward, Lord Dudley. "Goliah," by the way, was not a new work, for it had been performed at the Haymarket Theatre in 1773. It is pleasant to note that Atterbury, having owed the performance of his work to his noble patron, "handsomely" handed over the profits from the sale of his "Goliah" to the hospital. The chorus and band of the first of the triennial Festivals were much bigger than in 1768 and 1778, and the attendance was more numerous, probably owing to the fact that the nobility and the gentry of the district had taken much interest in the Festival. The profits actually amounted to £703. The next Festival, in 1787, was even a greater success, and the local clergy, fired by the example of the nobility and gentry, actively interested themselves in the Festival. "Israel in

Egypt" was performed for the first time in Birmingham, but the programme also contained music by Wilbye, Purcell, Corelli, and Gluck. The Festival, which was held on August 22, 23, and 24, was remarkable for the first appearance in Birmingham of Mrs. Billington, and the committee, having found her an attraction, engaged her rival, the famous Mme. Mara, for the next Festival. From the small beginnings of 1768 the Birmingham Festival was gradually become an important fixture, and in 1802 a new epoch was begun by Joseph Moore, who then became the chief adviser of the committee. The chorus was enlarged and the orchestra consisted of more than a hundred performers. The hospital received £2,330 from this Festival, the largest amount since the Festivals were first instituted. The committee took much care in providing for the physical well-being of visitors to Birmingham, and made arrangements that the two principal inns, the "Stork" and the "Shakespeare," should give substantial "ordinaries" at five shillings per head including malt liquor, and it was decided that no more than ninepence per head should be paid for tea at the balls.



Photo by] [*Russell & Sons.*

MADAME AGNES NICHOLLS.

The policy of engaging "stars," or relying on their attraction—a policy which is no longer in vogue—began with the Festival of 1811, when the famous Catalani made a great sensation. She was engaged

for the succeeding Festival, and the committee also obtained the consent of Mr. Harris, the manager of Covent Garden, for the first appearance of the celebrated Miss Stephens, afterwards the Countess of Essex. From that time there was always an operatic star at the Birmingham Festival, as the improvement in receipts from Festival to Festival sufficiently proved the wisdom of the committee.

In 1834 the first Festival was held in the new Town Hall, and the organ, the finest instrument then in existence, was used for the first time. The following Festival was remarkable for the first appearance of Mendelssohn in Birmingham to conduct in "St. Paul." This engagement was due to the enterprise of Moore, who went specially to Berlin to interview Mendelssohn. The composer himself made his *début* in Birmingham as conductor of his "Midsummer Night's Dream" music on the Tuesday evening. The next day he directed the performance of "St. Paul," and on the Friday, before leaving the town, he played Bach's prelude and fugue in E flat. "St. Paul" was not new, of course, to England, for it had been performed in Liverpool in 1836, and twice in London in 1837, before the date of the Festival. In a letter to his mother, Mendelssohn gave an interesting account of his impressions at Birmingham. He was particularly struck by the enthusiasm with which he was received.



Photo by] [*Lafayette.*

MADAME KIRKBY LUNN.

"The applause and shouts at the last glimpse of me were incessant," he wrote, "and sometimes really made me laugh; for instance, they prevented my being able for long to sit down to the instrument to play a pianoforte concerto; and, what is better than all this applause, and a sure proof of my success, were the offers made to me on all sides, of a very different tenor this time from what they ever were before."

At the next Festival, in 1840, his "Lobgesang" was the chief attraction. The composer's setting of the 114th Psalm was also performed, and between the two parts of one of the concerts he played his pianoforte concerto in G minor. The performance of the "Hymn of Praise" did not please Mendelssohn, however, for in a letter to a friend he subsequently referred to the imperfect form in which it was produced at Birmingham owing to his illness. There was no actual novelty at the next Festival, but in 1846 "Elijah" was first given to the world in accordance with the arrangement made by Moore when engaging Mendelssohn to conduct "St. Paul." The account of the enthusiasm with which this work was received strikes the modern reader as a trifle hysterical, for worship of the composer and his music was so inextricably mixed that there seems no measure of critical appreciation in anything that was written at the time. "During the whole two hours and a half that it lasted," wrote the composer to his brother, "the large hall, with its two thousand people, and the large orchestra, were so fully intent on the one object in question that not the slightest sound was to be heard among the whole audience, so that I could sway at pleasure the enormous orchestra and choir and also the organ accompaniments."

In a letter to the wife of Dr. Frege, of Leipzig, Mendelssohn entered into a detailed



Photo by] [*Elliott & Fry.*

MISS PERCEVAL ALLEN.



Photo by] [*Elliott & Fry.*

MISS GLEESON WHITE.

description of the performance. He found the soprano solos most "truly miserable and forlorn." There was, however, much that was good to make up for this. "The rich, full sounds of the orchestra and the huge organ, combined with the powerful choruses, who sang with honest enthusiasm, the wonderful resonance in the grand giant hall; an admirable English tenor singer, Staudigl, too, who took all possible pains, and whose talents and powers you already well know, and in addition a couple of excellent second soprano and contralto solo singers; all executing the music with peculiar spirit and the utmost fire and sympathy, doing justice not only to the lowest passages, but also to the softest *pianos*, in a manner which I had never before heard from such masses; and, in addition, an impressionable, kindly, hushed and enthusiastic audience—all that is, indeed, sufficient good fortune for a first performance. In fact, I never in my life heard a better, or I may say so good a one, and I almost doubt whether I shall ever again hear one equal to it, because there were so many favourable combinations on this occasion. Along, however, with so much light, as I before said, there were also shadows, and the worst was the soprano part. It was all so neat, so pretty, so elegant, so slovenly, so devoid both of soul and head, that the music acquired a kind of amiable expression, which even now almost drives me mad when I think of it. The voice of the contralto, too, was not powerful enough to



Photo by] [*Elliott & Fry.*

MADAME ADA CROSSLEY.

fill the hall, or to make itself heard beside such masses and such solo singers; but she sang exceeding well and musically, and in that case the want of voice can be tolerated. At least to *me*, *nothing* is so repugnant in music as a certain cold, soulless coquetry, which is in itself so unmusical, and yet so often adopted as the basis of singing and playing and music of all kinds. It is singular that I find this to be the case much less even with Italians than with us Germans. It seems to me that our countrymen must either love music in all sincerity, or they display an odious, stupid and affected coldness, while an Italian throat sings just as it comes, in a straightforward way, though perhaps for the sake of money, *and* æsthetics, *and* criticism, *and* self-esteem, *and* the right school, and twenty-seven thousand other reasons, none of which really harmonise with their real nature. This struck me very forcibly at the Musical Festival." Mendelssohn's remarks apply rather forcibly to the English school of oratorio singing and even to the choral singing of the past.

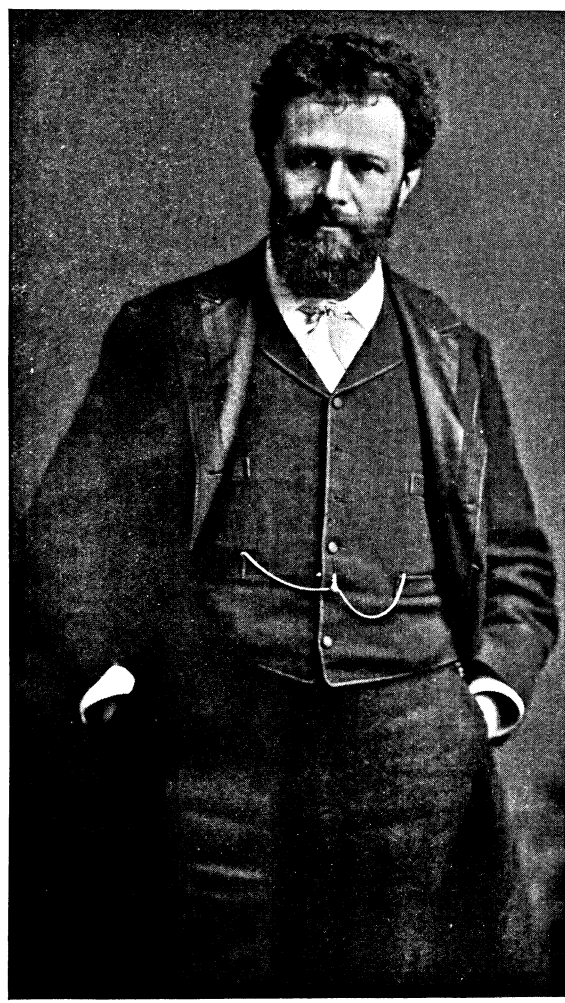


Photo by] [*W. & D. Downey.*

MR. GEORGE HENSCHEL.

The Festival of 1849 was remarkable for the fact that Michael Costa conducted it for the first time, and that the programme included Mendelssohn's "Walpurgis Night," the "Ruy Blas" overture, and the Symphony in A minor. The policy of the committee remained unchanged for Festival after Festival. Star singers and instrumentalists were engaged, but after the success of "Elijah," some work by Mendelssohn was made a standing features with an oratorio of Handel. Native composers were not neglected, and Costa did not overlook himself. The British composer owes a good deal to the Birmingham Festivals. In the programme, from 1855 to 1870 we find that Macfarren's "Leonore," Glover's "Tam O'Shanter," Smart's "Bride of Dunkerron," Sullivan's "Kenilworth," Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria," and Barnett's "Ancient Mariner" and "Paradise and the Peri" were performed for the first time. In later years Stanford's "Three Holy Children," "Eden" and "Requiem," Cowen's "Sleeping Beauty" and Parry's "Judith" were among the native compositions commissioned for the Birmingham Festival. The foreign composer was not forgotten, and Dvorák's "Spectre's Bride" and "Requiem" and Gounod's "Mors et Vita" were among the more important works produced. The furore created by Mendelssohn was never repeated by any other foreigner. Indeed, it was left to our own Edward Elgar to make anything like the sensation produced by "Elijah."

The year 1900 was very remarkable in this respect, for it was then that "The Dream of Gerontius" was first performed. Elgar had already made his mark with

"Lux Christi," "King Olaf," and "Caractacus." His splendid Enigma Variations had specially attracted the attention of Dr. Richter, and, as a result, the Birmingham Committee felt justified in asking Elgar for a work to occupy a whole morning. The history of the production of the work is so recent that it is unnecessary to repeat it here, or to refer in detail to the poor performance of "The Dream of Gerontius" and its causes. To the curious of posterity it will be a matter of interest to read that many apologists for the choir referred to the incredible difficulties of Elgar's choral writing, and that for a time these supposititious obstacles did prevent performances of the oratorio in this country; but soon after the successful production of the work in Germany, "The Dream of Gerontius" was sung by every choral society in the kingdom. Elgar's latest oratorios, "The Apostles" and "The Kingdom," enabled the fine choir to show the world that it was not the mere difficulty of "The Dream of Gerontius" which stood in the way of a completely successful performance. Sir Edward Elgar has no choral novelty in the programme of this year's Festival, but "The Dream of Gerontius" is to be performed, and Sir Edward Elgar's Symphony will be played for the first time at this Festival.



Photo by] [*Russell & Sons.*

MR. DALTON BAKER.



Photo by] [*Elliott & Fry.*

MR. JOHN COATES.



Photo by] [*Russell & Sons.*

MR. FREDERICK AUSTIN.



"THE STEP." BY JOHN PETTIE, R.A.

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WHITE WALLS.

By MAX PEMBERTON.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—On her twenty-first birthday the Countess Ulusia, sole heiress of the lords of Rabka, becomes in her own right the richest woman in Austria, and is escorted home from a convent school near Vienna—where she has spent the past fifteen years of her life—by her uncle, a bishop, and Count Rudolph of Trieste, who has managed the vast salt-mines of her ancestral estates during her minority. Count Rudolph has made up his mind to marry the heiress, but she has already gathered vaguely that he has cruelly oppressed the downtrodden populace that toils in her vast, subterranean salt-mines, and she is determined not only to exact an account of his stewardship, but to judge for herself of its wisdom and its humanity. She receives a picturesque welcome from the rough masses in her strange kingdom in the underworld, but soon realises that oppression has brought about a state of ferment bordering on insurrection. The more violent of the rebellious spirits are for throwing off all authority, even if it entails the killing not only of Count Rudolph, but of the young mistress in whose name they are harshly ruled. But Jura the Wise, a young man of unknown parentage, but a born leader of men, is sent by the aged Anna, "the Witch," from the mines to the Castle, with this command: "If she be our enemy, kill her as the people wish; if she be a friend, save her and show her to the people." Reared entirely in the underground world of the mines, but reared in mental culture and refinement by a monk named Arthur, the young idealist is thrilled by the strange beauty of the new world into which he emerges; but mindful of his mission he obtains a secret audience with the young Countess and tells her of her people's grievances. The police are visiting the people's houses to take their children from them. The old right of Parliament is being denied to them. There is a new scale of fine and punishment, and the people will not suffer it. "This is done in your name," cries Jura to the girl. "If it is not by your will, I will tell the people so." He is arrested, and the storm of insurrection breaks, but when the rioters besiege the tower in which their leader is imprisoned, Count Rudolph cries: "I cannot release the prisoner, for he is already free." Jura has escaped from his prison and rescues Ulusia from the fury of both fire and rioters, and when she opens her eyes from the long sleep of exhaustion she finds herself lying in one of the caves of the subterranean galleries of Rabka. Here she sojourns in safety, attended by the aged Anna, and here she learns how Jura was originally named Philip, after the lord Philip whom he strongly recalls in appearance. From Mathilde, a girl of the people, who loves Jura, the young Countess learns that Jura is thought to be the son of the dead lord Philip. The child died and was buried in the chapel of Rabka, but the child has come to life again and will be the master of the people. What, then, will be her own position if his right to reign in Rabka should ever be established? Justice must be done, but how? For the Count Rudolph long since banished the only man who held any proofs. Full of doubts, Ulusia leaves her refuge for Vienna, after stipulating that Jura shall follow her if she sends for him. Once she is gone, however, Jura is betrayed to the Count's soldiers and shut up in a madhouse at Pavna. The Count tells Ulusia that he has died there, but she sends a young Englishman, Lord Amblehurst, who is in love with her, to see the aged Anna, and subsequently to Jajce to search for the Monk Arthur and proofs of Jura's parentage. The girl Mathilde is allowed to bring a letter to Jura, summoning him to Vienna, because the Governor says: "The fool will risk his neck for this. If he tries to go by the mountains, we shoot him; if he leaps, he will be drowned." But with the aid of a boatman Jura succeeds in crossing the lake below the madhouse and reaches a wayside railway station. Even there, however, he is baulked, for he has been robbed by the boatman of the money conveyed to him by Mathilde, and cannot pay for his journey to Vienna.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BALL AT THE EMBASSY.

VIENNA could make but little of Ulusia von Erlach, and it soon abandoned the attempt to make anything at all. Some said boldly that she was a little fool, whose brains had been addled by long residence in a convent. Others thought her the true daughter of that wild fellow, Feodor von Erlach, whose debaucheries had astonished the city many years ago and were still remembered. She was waiting her opportunity, they said; and let the right man come along and a beginning be made with a conventional marriage, and then they would see.

Whatever the personal factor, all agreed that she knew how to use the famous Erlach Palace, and that her entertainments were worthy of its reputation; dinners, *soirées musicales*, balls, celebrated the brief season of spring. The most exclusive society in the world could tolerate reservation and childish hauteur in return for these things. The priests found her generous, if not prone to the practice of pieties; but they reflected that her spiritual welfare was in the hands of the good Bishop Heinrich and could very well be left there.

Her days at this time might have been exciting enough, had she willed that they should be so. The mornings found her on horseback; the afternoons driving in the Prater or visiting; the evenings witnessed her triumphs in many great houses and the confusion of the hordes of well-drilled youths who followed after.

Whispers of love were often in her ears. She moved through a splendid world of light, laughter, and music, and ever seemed to hear the threadbare story of her charm and its consequences. Had she responded with vivacity or even a suspicion of coquetry,

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"There was a ball at the American Embassy that night."

men would have fought for her as gladiators in a new arena. But she repelled even the zealots by her reticence, silenced the most eloquent by her cold patronage. They came to say of her at last that she was not a true Southerner at all, but a daughter of the North, who would never burn at any man's kiss nor understand the meaning of his passion. Herein they were quite mistaken. This mere child lived still in a dreamland, but it was one upon which reality had cast its shadow.

She had a fine capacity for enjoyment—could have danced or piped with the best of them if it had not been for the events at Rabka and the aftermath of doubt she garnered there.

The momentous secret discovered during the days when she had been a fugitive burned its doubt into her very soul and put a pall upon every pleasure.

How, indeed, if the fables were true and he whom they called Jura the Wise were the true master of the Palace and its riches? Then, for a fact, was her house of pleasure built upon sand and deservedly must fall. She believed that it was so, and patiently and with resignation she waited for the end. Let the sacrifice be what it might, she knew that she would have the courage to make it.

The Englishman had been gone to Bosnia some days at this time, and no news had come from him. She had seen old General Wagner, the lord Philip's closest friend, and had told him her story very faithfully, to his great astonishment and incredulity. It is true that he promised to carry the matter, if necessary, to the Kaiser himself, and declared his intention of obtaining Jura's immediate release. But he confessed at the same time his utter disbelief in the story, and the dangers which attended its disclosure.

"If this man is not mad and cannot prove his words," he said, "they will imprison him for life. Are you willing that he should run such a risk?"

She said that she was. Her faith was not to be shaken nor her determination undermined when she resolved to surrender everything to one who had so good a claim to it, provided he established his identity and could convince the Court that he was Philip's son.

When she told the General that she had summoned the man to her house, and would harbour him there until the days of the trial, he exclaimed upon her imprudence, but could not divert her intention. His own good sense planned a different course. He would write to Bishop Heinrich, have this mad fellow kept awhile at Strepitza, and then sent back to the mines under a safe-conduct, should his story prove false, as it must. There he did not doubt that Count Rudolph of Trieste would be able to take care of the man. At which thought he smiled and renewed his promise to Ulusia.

She was very sad when she returned to the Erlach Palace, and her depression seemed oddly out of place in that gay city.

Vienna is the most enchanting capital in Europe in the days of April and May, and nowhere may such wonderful uniforms and gowns, such handsome men or such beautiful women, be seen.

Driving to her house from the General's quarters at the War Office, Ulusia passed many a fine equipage, surprised more than one dubious romance, and waved her greeting to several would-be lovers. The whole city was redolent of flowers and pretty faces, of voluptuous music and glorious sunshine. Even the old Palace appeared to have put on fine raiment to herald the summer, and the gorgeous crimson flowers which bedecked its windows were entirely in keeping with that pretty scene.

Her servant Hans, a man she had learned to trust before others in the Palace, awaited her upon her return, and had confidential questions to answer. Her inquiry whether the telegrams had been despatched obtained a welcome affirmative. Hans assured her that her instructions had been carried out in every particular, and that all was prepared, adding the emphatic declaration that she might rely upon his fidelity. A brief word of thanks sent her to her writing-table, and there she opened a long and fulsome letter of apology—the sixth in as many days—from Count Rudolph, in which he protested his homage anew and added for her amusement a full account of her mad friend and of his death in the lake of Mszana.

"There is no doubt," said the Count, "that the man committed suicide. He was closely watched, but not so closely that he did not find an opportunity to settle his affair in the lake of Pavna. I regret this, for I had already submitted a case to the Court and would have taken a judicial decision. But chiefly let me express my sense of desolation that this ridiculous impostor should have won your sympathy and caused you, I fear, so many hours of disquiet. Believe me, there never was the

shadow of a truth in these old stories. The poor rogue they called Jura the Wise was the son of the old woman Anna. His father was a man of the people, and the whole fable was but the fruit of his desertion. I believe the woman to be no saner than the son, and that her infatuation was directly responsible for his death. Be assured that we are well quit of him, and in all that I have done I have studied your interests and those of the great trust bequeathed to me."

She put the letter down, disbelieving every word of it, yet sadly troubled. Lord Amblehurst had hinted at the perils threatening Jura in the madhouse, and she was well acquainted with Rudolph. So it seemed just possible that this story might differ from the others and be true. What the truth might mean to her, what new view of life it might present, she would not contemplate for the moment. Something of the melancholy and sorrow of Rabka's life crept upon her and chid her doubting. He was Philip's son—oh, she knew that!—and if he had come to Vienna, the world would have knelt to him. This was her unalterable conviction. A great man had groped his way through the darkness and stood for an instant at the gates of light. Tragic indeed if Fate stayed him on the threshold.

She had often amused herself by depicting Jura's entrance into Viennese society, the curiosity he would excite, the admiration his magnetic personality must win. There was about him an authority and a majesty she had found irresistible, and she did not doubt that the world would endorse her verdict. She saw him the true master of the Palace, the yoke cast from him, the kingdom assured. Her own part in that glorious hour was not to be played even by her imagination. She wished Jura to reign and to conquer; she was but a woman, and dominion must be denied to her.

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There was a ball at the American Embassy that night, and she went with the old Baroness Elwitza to play the part expected of her, and to hear again the amorous inanities to which the days were accustoming her.

This was a splendid spectacle, and yet many did not hesitate to say that Ulusia von Erlach was the dominant personality, the true mistress of that glittering assembly.

She moved through the immense room as one who received homage willingly, but esteemed it at no great price. Men said they had never seen her so radiant; a fire of dignity flashed in her eyes, her smile enchanted, the touch of her hand made pulses leap. She danced with an *abandon* none had expected of her, and the rumour passed anon that she had found a lover, and henceforth every movement was watched, every glance aside detected.

Who was the lucky fellow? What Adonis had moved this glorious icicle or discovered the heart in a superb automaton?

Assuredly it would be for love that she laughed so lightly, for what other motive might trouble Ulusia, and where was the authority which could compel her?

Refusing to believe in the story of a *mésalliance*, fingers were pointed at many an innocent but hopeful satellite, at soldiers, diplomatists, even at the princes of the Royal house. These were at no pains to deny the accusations, but Ulusia's very deeds gave the lie to them. She was gracious to all the world to-night, it appeared. Bald-headed generals, who hymned Erato in waning falsetto, ridiculous gallants who rolled to the assault as barrels to a cellar, dashing officers of cavalry, earnest gunners, *attachés*, mere nobles, alike won that winning smile or earned the poignant jest. Amazed by this new revelation of her wit and beauty, men now promised her the glories of the year.

It is true that she had been a long time "arriving," but this they set down to the convent's teaching; and since she had discovered that Society really cared very little about those old stories of the world, the flesh, and the devil, she would certainly go far.

Ulusia herself could have given you no good account of this almost dramatic change, nor did she trouble about it.

She felt, she knew not why, that some new thing was about to come into her life, that the long years of gloom and seclusion were passing and that even Rabka's shadow would lie upon her no more. A consuming desire to taste of the pleasures upon which others exclaimed so rapturously drove her to comparative excesses which astonished even the aged Baroness. Here she was aping the greatest coquettes in the city, giving her roses to this man, her confidences to that, dancing as wildly as any *coryphée* from the opera-house in the Ringstrasse, as ready to press the hand which pressed her own as the oldest *roué* at the Embassy. And all this because something was going to happen at the Erlach Palace, something inevitable, something which would make her life very

different from anything it had ever been before.

Vienna goes to bed betimes, and you must visit the officers' quarters and the more tawdry houses of pleasure to find many awake when the clock strikes one. As it happened, it was just half-past one when Ulusia returned to the Erlach Palace, and five minutes later when the astonished Hans confronted her with the news.

"He is here, Excellency; he is waiting in the white boudoir."

There was no need to mention any names. Ulusia understood in an instant that Jura had come to Vienna and had found his way to her house. Turning to the amazed Baroness, she declared her intention of seeing her friend alone.

"He is my cousin," she said quietly, "and he has come at my request. I am going to justify him, Baroness, and you must help me. Remember the life he has lived and the ordeal this must be to him. I will see him alone, and you shall speak to him to-morrow."

She would hear no rebuke, accept no admonition, and not delaying even to cast off her opera-cloak, she ran up the wide stairs and stood a moment at the door of the boudoir. Here a long glass showed her a superb vision of roses nestling in soft tresses which shone as burnished gold, a vision of flaming cheeks and eyes afire, of the sheen of delicate pink satin and the glitter of jewels. She turned from it with pleasure, and opening the door, she entered tremulously, as a young girl going to her lover.

CHAPTER XXII.

INHERITANCE.

THE lord Philip had been a lover of Paris in his youth, and the white boudoir in the Erlach Palace was one of fifty rooms which bore witness to his good taste and to his riches.

Here were treasures which fortunes would not purchase in the twentieth century—cabinets from St. Cloud, clocks of which the fellows were at Fontainebleau, vitrines from the *châteaux*, mirrors of colossal height and intricate beauty of framing, low chairs in exquisite tapestry, the paintings of Bouchier and the Vernets, the cabinets which Watteau had painted.

Of all that adornment, the carpets, soft in texture and brilliant in hue, spoke of the East and its industries. Had you named the apartment as a *salon* of the glorious days of Louis XV., that title must have passed unquestioned.

In such an apartment Ulusia found Jura again and welcomed him to Vienna. Here the *abandon* of which he had been the subject at the Embassy attained its consummation.

She entered the room softly, her heart beating rapidly, her cheeks on fire. The wise Hans had turned on many electric lamps, and in the flood of clear, white light she perceived a cloaked figure standing before a great mirror and motionless thereat. Then a loud cry greeted her, and in an instant she was held in giant arms, clasped close, covered with burning kisses.

"It is you—you—and I have found you—my beloved—and I have found you!"

No other words than these were at his command. All the dire hours had found their reward in this; the man's whole life was lived in that supreme instant when he caught her to his heart and dared in her own house what he never would have dared in his own.

She freed herself at last and tried to push him from her. A nervous outbreak akin to hysteria bade her utter a commonplace, and she indicated the crushed satin and the tousled hair, and commanded him to understand what he had done. Upon his part a sudden fear of himself and of her abashed him. This celestial vision and the picture which the glass had shown him—the picture of a worn and weary man, with eyes unutterably sad and pallid face, and the great coarse cloak which the officials at the railway had found for him—what had they two in common?

"I leaped from the rock at Pavna," he said quietly, "and found my way to the railway. A boatman robbed me, and I had no money; then the train arrived, but the chief remembered me and put me into the carriage. There was another waiting for me at Vienna, and he lent me his cloak and sent me here. I do not know why they should have helped me; I cannot understand why I found friends."

She laughed at this and answered him joyously.

"My servant Hans telegraphed to every station between here and Borowitza. We ordered that your tickets were to be given you and your journey made comfortable. I knew that you would escape them, Jura—I knew that you would come to me—and so I sent the telegrams."

He caught her in his arms again and thanked her by his kisses.

"I have known that it would be so," he cried. "I could have made my way from Pavna any day, but I waited for the summons. She will send for me, I said—she will not have forgotten."

It was said so simply, with such dignity, that it touched her to the quick, and looking up into his eyes, she forgot the dusty figure, the dirty cloak, the torn boots—forgot all but the man's face and the truth she read therein. This was Jura, the lord Philip's son. No other could have stood the ordeal at the Erlach Palace.

"I knew that it would be to-night," she said. "I went to the American Embassy so that I should not have to count the minutes. But I was telling myself all the time that you would come, and this has not surprised me. Now we shall keep you until the end. I have told your father's friend, General Wagner, that I meant to do so, and he approves. You need fear nothing here. It is your own house, Jura; you are the true master of it."

She would not wait for an answer, but rang the bell and summoned Hans to the room, and when he appeared, she commanded him to bring wine and food, and to tell the Baroness to come down. Jura, however, fearing the ordeal, begged her to desist, saying that they had given him food and drink, and that his greatest need was sleep.

"I have had but two hours in as many days," he said with dignity. "Remember how I come into your world, the sights I have seen, the sounds with which my ears ring. Oh, it is all wonderland! I never thought the earth so big—I did not believe that so many people were alive. And the lights and all the shapes which go to and fro before my eyes, the height of your heaven above me, the tongues clamouring, the endlessness of it all—I would fly from that, I would rest, that I may ask myself if I am fit to live in such a world, or must find it insupportable. Do you not understand that, Ulusia—do you not see that I must rest?"

She assented immediately, giving her orders to Hans, who had watched the scene open-eyed and was still lost in perplexity. This ragged fellow on the sofa, this giant of a man, whose boots were tumbling from his feet, whose collar was a ragged scarf, whose hands were seared and scarred, might he call her Excellency "Ulusia" and go unrebuked? He knew not what to make of it, if he might not say that the Erlachs had been mad through the generations, and that this mistress, whom he worshipped, was no saner than her ancestors.

"I will prepare a room, Excellency," he said, and that was all.

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His bedroom was a vast apartment upon the second floor of the Erlach Palace, and from its windows you had a fine view over the Danube to the Prater and the open country.

This had been a guest-chamber in the days of Philip, and had been changed but little since his time. Massive furniture was canopied by a ceiling gloriously painted; the bed of gilt had shapely carvings upon its baldachino; the floor was of parquet with fine Eastern rugs. A second apartment disclosed a bath of pure porcelain and a monster basin supported by caryatides; but everything might have been described tersely as "princely," and the word have found its true meaning.

To this room Hans conducted the guest who had come so strangely to the Erlach Palace, and here he bestirred himself to display those talents for which his mistress applauded him. An attempt by the way to address Jura lightly had been answered with such dignity and reserve that he fell to the word "Excellency" as though no other were possible, and began to ask himself what mystery lay behind the visitation and when he would solve it.

"Your Excellency will wish to bathe?" he inquired. Jura bent his head and said that it was his pleasure.

"I fear the water will not be very hot at this hour, Excellency, but if you could wait——"

"It will serve," was the curt reply, and Hans turned the silver taps and set out the towels.

"I will bring your Excellency a sleeping-suit," he went on. "If it amuses your Excellency, it is one which has been worn by his lordship the Bishop of Strepitza."

Jura smiled, but did not rebuke him.

"I will put on sanctity," he said; and the man returned anon with a delicate suit of silk, which he laid upon the bed with the gentle fingers of a woman.

"There is brandy in the decanters," he continued, indicating a pair of shapely Venetian bottles upon the bed-table; "your Excellency will find the cigarettes in the silver box beside them. If there is anything further, the bell rings in the room of

Albrecht, the valet. I wish your Excellency good-night."

Jura thanked him with a word while he cast off his tattered clothing and threw it from him.

The maze of the dream became more profound each instant; he put out hesitating fingers to touch the fine furniture, the silk curtains, the silver by his bedside. He had been an ardent smoker always, and he lighted a cigarette and puffed it contemplatively, pouring also a little brandy into a long-stemmed glass and sipping it.

Minute by minute, however, the shame at his own appearance deepened. He spurned the filthy rags at his feet as though degradation came by them. The water delighted him; he dwelt upon the luxury of that wonderful bath, lay long contemplating the scene about him, and fearing that it would vanish from his sight. So sure was this dread that he would not turn out the electric light, but crept into the vast bed with the glow of twenty lamps upon his eyes and the dawn light breaking over the Prater.

What had come to him? Whose was the voice which called him out of the mine?

Was it not the voice of the beautiful woman, the first vision which the world of day had shown to him, the last as he believed that it could show? And why had this woman stretched out a hand to touch his filthy rags, to call him from the darkness, to *fête* him thus as though he were a prince? He answered complacently that all this was done because of the truth—that he was the lord Philip's son and that this was his inheritance. At the same time his scruples remained. He had dreamed it all and the day would dispel the dream.

Here we find a man unable to sleep, dozing from hour to hour and then starting up as one who must be vigilant and stand sentinel over this house of enchantment. He feared that sleep would rob him, and fought with the dreams. When fatigue overcame him and perforce he must surrender, he lived again the dreadful hours at Pavna, was in the burning Castle, then back to the mines, which cried out for him and would not be denied.

This latter was the most curious of all his hallucinations. Despite all that he had seen of the city, long days of a spring sunshine, the glory of valley and of mountain, he could contemplate with equanimity his return to Styx and the caves—could wander as a free man rejoicing in his freedom through the vast halls, the deepest chasms of that world of salt, and find in every one of them some image of the woman who had offered him salvation.

Ulusia, indeed, became the goddess of his achievements rather than the mere mortal whom he loved physically. He worshipped her as a figure above an altar, led her from cave to cave and beheld the transfiguration of all about her. But this was only in his sleep, and directly he awoke the old fears returned, the deeper wonder, the entrancing sense of possession.

It was a sunny morning, the sky wonderfully blue, the houses so purely white that they might have been built of the finest marble. An invigorating breeze swept lightly across the great plain upon which Vienna is built, rose and stirred the leaves as with a hand of velvet. People who went abroad at that early hour were merry and laughing, and told each other that summer was at hand. Jura, lying in the vast bed and watching the sunbeams playing above the crimson carpet, listened to these sounds as to a revelation. There had been no joy at Rabka, no unfettered merriment, no spontaneous revelation of self and its content. Passions there ran to extremes; men loved, feared, hated, with all the intensity of human nature, but moderation they did not know. Here in Vienna everyone seemed possessed by the *joie de vivre* and went about as though desiring to infect the community with his own agreeable disease. Jura did not understand it. Did life, then, mean so much to them?

A valet came to him at eight o'clock and brought him tea and fruit. He received them gratefully, but heard with less pleasure the intimation that her Excellency would expect him in the gardens of the Palace in half an hour, and that General Wagner, of whom he had heard much, would be with her. The morning light was no friend to the filthy rags he had spurned yesternight, and he told the man as much and begged her Excellency to excuse him. The answer was an assurance that the difficulty had already been arranged.

"The tailor will be here immediately, Excellency. I will prepare your bath if you so wish."

He bade the man do so, and wrapping himself in a rose satin dressing-gown, laid already upon his bed, he went to the windows and looked out. Truly this was an enchanting scene—the ripe greens of the park, the splendid white buildings, the sleepy old Danube eddying in the sunshine, the gay

equipages, the figures on horseback, the hussars, the foot soldiers. He could hear also the church bells ringing, and their note was more musical than any he remembered.

But chiefly he was conscious of this, that Ulusia herself, just returned from the Prater and still wearing a riding-habit in a pretty shade of green, walked upon the terrace below, and that with her was that fine old fellow, General Wagner, who had promised to protect the fugitive from his enemies.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CHURCH MILITANT.

BISHOP HEINRICH arrived in Vienna at a quarter past three precisely and drove immediately to General Wagner's quarters at the War Office.

Rarely had this good old man been in such a state of mental and physical distress; rarely had he been at so little pains to hide his trouble.

He was admitted to the General's presence immediately, and the flood of his pathetic eloquence threatened to engulf him in a torrent of angry declamation. Had the General heard the news? Did he know what was happening at the Erlach Palace? A pretty thing, but one chiefly for the police.

"I have telegraphed already to all concerned," he said, when he could get his breath. "Count Rudolph is at Rabka, but should be here this afternoon. The Baron Airenthal knows what is happening, the Kaiser must hear. These mines are, in a sense, national property. My niece is but a puppet, as the Courts will determine. Do you not see, my dear General, that if this fellow can persuade a sufficient number of people to believe in his claims, our trouble may be endless?"

The General said that he perceived it. A very cool, calculating old gentleman, with curly white hair and the bluest of eyes, he puffed a cigarette from an amber tube and watched the Bishop almost with amusement.

"It is all very true, my lord," he said; "but just a question before we go any further. What do you believe in the matter? Are you prepared to swear that the man is an impostor?"

"Of course I am. My brother's child was buried at Rabka. How can this man be his son?"

"Were not stories of the kind told in the mine many years ago?"

"I know it; they were fables. Philip lost his reason when his wife died. He always feared that his brother Feodor would kill the child. It was unreasonable, absurd, a sick man's hallucination. The child died two years before the father. His grave stands yet; the fire did not destroy it."

"And it has been opened?"

"Count Rudolph has seen to that. There is not a shadow of justification for this impossible story."

The General coughed and scattered the ashes from his cigarette lightly upon the carpet.

"Have you seen the man?"

"I may have done so. He was the boatman at Rabka. I have visited the subterranean lake—as other tourists do."

The General nodded his head.

"I advise you to see him," he said shortly.

"Do you mean to say that he resembles my dead brother Philip?"

"I mean to say this—that if you put him in hussar uniform to-morrow, there is not one man in a hundred who could tell you whether he were Philip or his son."

The Bishop sighed; he had feared it.

"We have that to think of," he admitted reluctantly. "You suggest that there may have been a second marriage, of which we know nothing? But, General, you would not propose to hand over the mines at Rabka to this fellow?"

"Ah, there you have it! That far I grant you he is an impostor. But don't you see that the very fact demands fair reparation, a generous allowance, a certain measure of protection? I tell you, Bishop, that the treatment which this poor fellow has received is a scandal—and a scandal for which you, as well as others, may be called to account. Beware what you are doing, for you will have Society against you."

The Bishop mopped his brow.

"In any case, he cannot stop at the Erlach Palace."

"Why not? Is not that the safest place to keep him? Would you have him telling the story all over the city?"

"I would have nothing of the kind. There is my niece to consider. Do you not see that their residence under the same roof——"

The General waved the objection aside with a flourish of a fine, fat hand.

"He claims to be her cousin. You yourself are going to the Palace and can very well take care of it. Send him abroad, and the tongues begin to wag. If there is any-

thing in this story, it is our duty to discover it. Should the man prove to have any claim, then we must provide for him. I have told the Count so, and I remain of the opinion. Remember what Society will think of us for sending a poor fellow, who is a kinsman, whatever he is not, to the madhouse at Pavna. I tell you it was a shocking thing, Bishop, and one for which you may yet be called to account——"

"I—but you do not accuse me of it?"

"Then the silent Rudolph told you nothing?"

"I cannot say that—he made mention of it. I am one of the partners in the Rabka mine; he could not keep it from me."

"The better reason for you to hush it up. Avoid an inquiry and determine upon justice. I can give you no better advice."

"There is no justice in self-robbery. You forget that my niece is infatuated. Imagine Feodor's daughter stooping to a man who rowed ferry-boats for ten crowns a week! The Count goes so far as to say that she is in love with him. That I cannot believe. There is a limit, surely, to what Ulusia would do."

"I doubt it. A woman who loves is a democrat in her affections, but an autocrat in her acts. If she is determined that this man, her cousin, shall be her husband, I doubt if the Kaiser himself could stop her. You know the race, Bishop. It is a race which does not aspire to the highest things, but to those it most desires. At the same time, I foresee a tragedy and warn you. The fellow worships her, but not as she would be worshipped. In her presence he is a priest before the picture of the Madonna—or, rather, before the vision of the Madonna. She stands to him for heaven and earth, divinity, humanity. But I don't believe he would marry her if she asked him."

The Bishop laughed outright at this.

"My dear General," he exclaimed, "surely we are getting on. Here's a madman from the mines, as I believe him, and already you speak of marriage. Oh, come, come, let us speak as men of common sense."

"I am trying to do so, Bishop. An agent of mine left for Rabka this morning and is searching the records there. The young Englishman has gone to Jajce to find whether the Monk Arthur is alive or dead. I don't think we shall be long in doubt."

"And if nothing is proved?"

"Oh, then he goes—with some reward and our word that he will not be punished."

"But should there be proofs——?"

"In that case the Courts must pronounce upon them. There is no alternative. If we go to the Courts, it will either be fortune or what is very far from fortune for Philip's son. They will certainly condemn him to perpetual imprisonment."

The Bishop was about to say that he hoped it would be so, but catching a certain earnest expression upon the old soldier's face, he checked himself in time and put another question.

"You have met this young Englishman, Lord Amblehurst?" he asked.

The General said "Yes."

"And what do you think of him, General?"

"That he will carry Ulusia to London—unless you mobilise the Army to stop him."

"But this infatuation, this insanity——"

The General laughed.

"These things pass," he said. "She is young, and her head is full of ideas for which your mine is responsible. Let time do its work. Ours is more dangerous, Bishop, since it concerns both honour and fortune."

The Bishop admitted sadly that it was so; and, pleading the urgency of the occasion, hastened on to the Erlach Palace. General Wagner watched him from the window, and as the ponderous carriage drove away he followed it with curious eyes.

"Admirable fellow!" he said softly to himself; and then: "I wonder if he finds the poor blessed to-day?"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THERE IS NEWS FROM JAJCE.

SEVEN days had passed since the good Bishop Heinrich came in haste from Strepitza to the Erlach Palace; the morning of the eighth day found Ulusia at her desk in the white boudoir, writing to her friend Lord Amblehurst, and telling him very frankly of much that had happened since he left them.

"My uncle is here," she wrote, "and has added to our burdens. He questions Jura all day and is never tired of being answered. Yesterday he told me that the likeness between father and son was the most wonderful he had known, and when I claimed the admission and tried to hold him to it, his corrections were maladroit.

"I am sure that he believes what we all believe; while, as for General Wagner, he is with us heart and soul. There remains a hesitation, a vague response which perplexes me, and is illogical. They know the truth

and will not admit it—until disclosures shall compel them, if disclosure is to be hoped for. My own faith remains unshaken despite much that might move it. I know that Jura is my cousin, and am prepared to uphold the truth everywhere.

"Let me tell you that our task would be easier but for certain difficulties for which we are directly responsible. Jura is very ignorant of the world, childishly, pitiably ignorant. We took him to the Opera yesterday, and he seemed quite unable to understand that the singers played a part and were other than the characters they represented. He was moved as a child might have been who entered such a place for the first time—the music overwhelmed him; I saw the tears running down his face and for pity's sake I took him home. The same ignorance forbids participation in the commonest things of our daily life. He was condemned so long to the darkness that he is never happy until the lamps are lit. Perhaps he understands and resents the price he must pay for the crime that has been committed against him. He is one born to great riches who has few of the accomplishments, even of the pleasures, of his fellows. He cannot ride, he does not fence; he has some knowledge of books, but none of modern literature. His days are spent in recalling the stories of his youth, dreadful stories of the black galleries and of the fearful people who live in them.

"Need I tell you how distressing I find all this? To my distress must be added the doubt of which others make so much. Sooner or later this issue must come before the Courts. Should that happen before you can help us, then I dread to think what the issue may mean to him. But upon one thing I am resolved, and it is this—that he shall enjoy the heritage which is his, whatever be the verdict of the judges or the intrigues of those who seek their help."

She folded the letter and directed it to the Lord Amblehurst, at the Hôtel Jezero in the mountain town of Bosnia. The same footman who carried it from the room informed her that his Excellency, General Wagner, waited to see her, and she commanded him to admit the General at once. Premonition told her that he came with fateful news; she could resent the commonplaces with which he greeted her, and the preliminaries concerning the weather, the Court, and the Opera. It was a relief beyond words when he asked her a question concerning Lord Amblehurst.

"Heard from your young friend at Jajce—eh? Is he still on the warpath?"

"I heard from him yesterday. He talked of going on to Mostar."

"Then this wild-goose chase is finished. I thought we should come to it. My own people told me so very plainly."

Ulusia lifted her head.

"Your own people, General?"

"Yes, the fellows I sent after him. They told me the game was up. He has learned nothing. The Monk died three years ago—you were not misinformed."

She did not flinch from it, did not permit him to see that the news moved her.

"You mean to say that this is now confirmed, as Lord Amblehurst expected it would be. It remains then to discover the papers which the priest will have left."

General Wagner shook his head; he was very sorry for her, and he had a large heart for women.

"I mean, my dear child, that the sooner we recognise the logic of the facts, the better. This poor fellow may be all he says he is; but if he lives a hundred years, he will never prove it. What, then, are we going to do with him? You can't keep him here—that is certain. If you send him back to the mine——"

"No, no!" she exclaimed earnestly, "he shall never go back there, General!"

"Then what do you propose to do? How are you going to put a bridle upon busy tongues? I have told lies enough about it, Heaven knows. You would not have me make an art of it?"

"What lies have you told, General——"

"Innumerable. To begin with, that he is one of the Erlachs from Madrid, the family which emigrated to Spain with Marie Louise. It's a good story and satisfies people. They think he's half Spanish and are waiting to entertain him."

"You should not have done so," she said quietly; "you should have told the truth."

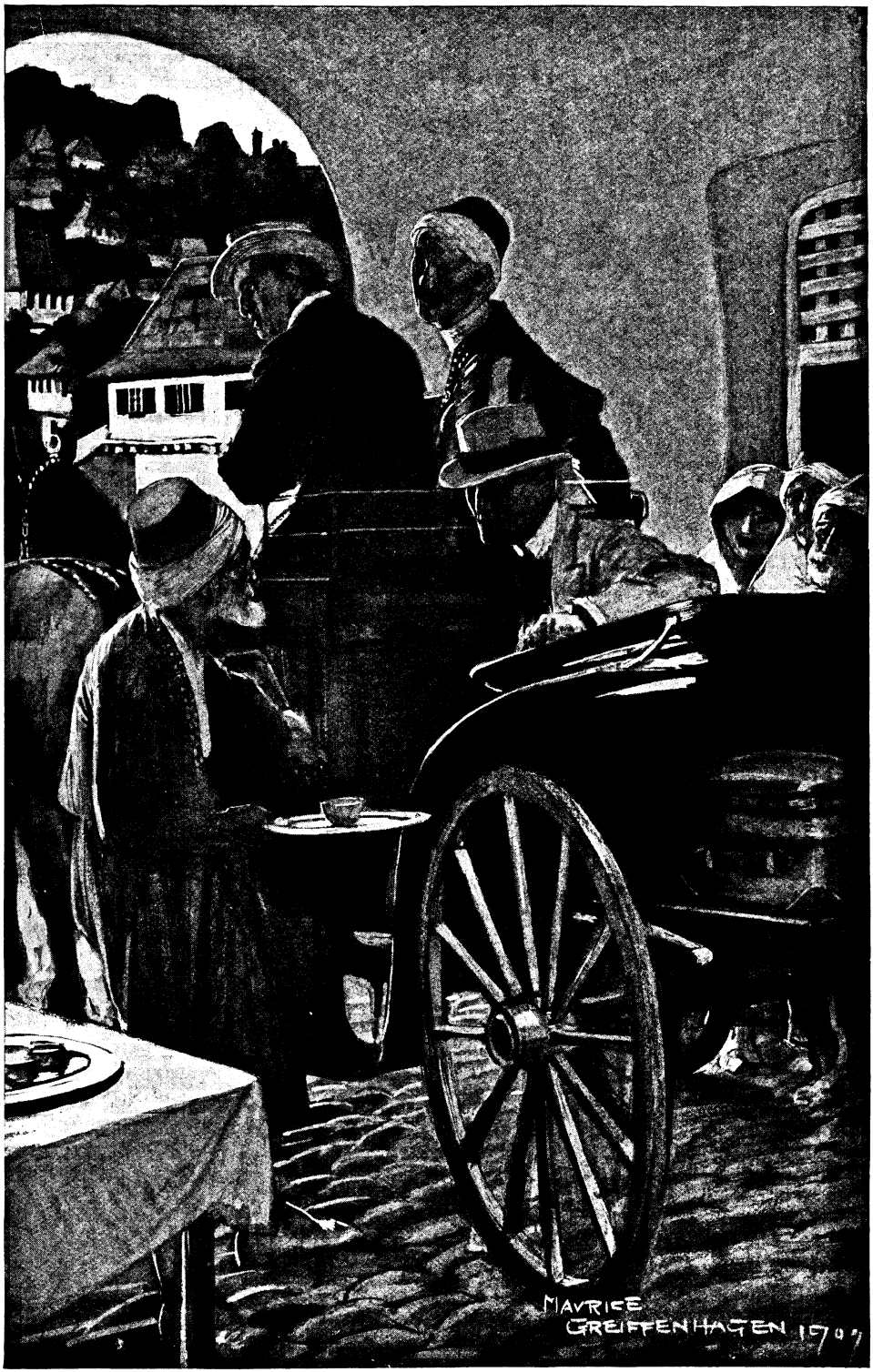
"And hurried the affair into Court, where, if he loses, they will imprison him for life."

She had known of this, but would not admit the knowledge.

"Impossible!" she exclaimed. "They could never commit such a wrong."

"They have no alternative. The trustees, headed by your clever friend, the Count, will press for it. I came here to tell you so; I have just seen your uncle—you know he returns to Strepitza to-day——".

"Yes, he will be away three days altogether."



"Beneath a narrow arch of the ramparts."

"Well, that's just the grace he gives us—three days. If there is no definite news from Jajce in three days, he brings the matter to trial. It's madness—but he says the scandal must be faced. You will be wise to telegraph to Lord Amblehurst, if you haven't done so already. But I expect you have done it," he added with a laugh.

She protested that she had written, but had not believed the matter urgent enough for a telegram. That omission should be rectified, however. She would see to it at once.

"Since he is doing your duty, General——"

"My duty! Please don't say that. I assure you that my agents have been at work night and day since I first heard of it. Am I the man to take my orders from the first roving Englishman who happens to please you?"

"To please me, General——"

"Certainly, and a very good thing too. He's a great man in England; I am pleased he should be your friend."

She would not pursue it. A telegram to Lord Amblehurst was written and despatched, and the General took his leave.

"Of course, we are wasting our words," he said as they parted; "nothing ever will be proved. But we owe it to the fellow to do our best. And I am doing mine. I give you my word, I have acted in this matter as though he were my own son."

"Whereas," she said quietly, "he was the son of your oldest friend."

He shook his head and went out slowly. In three days Vienna would tattle of nothing else. Well, it was not of his making; and as for the girl——

But the General did not pretend to understand women.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE TOWN ABOVE THE CASCADE.

LORD AMBLEHURST asked his valet whether the horsemen were still following the carriage, and being answered that they were no longer in sight, he settled himself with some content to enjoy the magnificent spectacle the hills were unfolding.

This had been a weary pilgrimage, but surely it drew towards its end. Five consecutive days of travel had carried him from Vienna to the Bosnian frontier, and thence to this beautiful city of Jajce, which has no rival in all South-Eastern Europe. Vainly had he passed from the gate of one monastery to the guest-house of another. The answer had ever been the same—he would ascertain all he desired to know at Jajce, where the Monk Arthur had died. It were idle to waste his time elsewhere.

And now he stood at Jajce's gate, and the virgin forests which had hemmed him in for twelve long hours opened out to show a majestic green mountain and a white city built upon its sides; and again, as it were pouring from the very gate of the city, a leaping, foaming cascade, which fell sheer a hundred feet and then raced onward to the lake of Jezero, which stands for wonderland in Bosnia.

It had been an odd quest, a strange affair, and the deeper he involved himself in its meshes, the better he liked it—which is another way of saying that he was a true sportsman, and that when his friends at the Marlborough had named him "the Admirable Gascoigne," they were perfectly well acquainted both with this side of his character and with others.

Twenty-five years of age, an athlete from his boyhood, who had played rackets for Harrow, won a running Blue at Cambridge, and managed to satisfy the examiners who pestered him with absurd questions concerning the ancients, he was now making "the grand tour"—as young men make it in our time, with a yacht and a motor-car among his baggage, and every embassy in Europe at his command.

This would be to say that it was at the English Embassy in Vienna that he met Ulusia von Erlach and desired from that moment to meet no other. Not her beauty alone, not her youth, certainly no knowledge of her fortune, inspired that absolute passion which mastered him and to which he submitted so willingly. For him she stood supreme, divinity of divinities—the mistress of a dignity, of a womanly charm and sweetness beyond anything he had known or imagined. Nor would he have been "the Admirable Gascoigne" if he had not resolved there and then to marry her, and to leave the world to its judgments.

Admittedly things had not begun very well. This story of Rabka and her strange inheritance came upon him as a thunderclap. He heard that she was wealthy beyond any woman in Austria, and received the news with equanimity. When she herself told him the story of the tragedy and its sequel, incredulity quickly gave place to astonishment and astonishment to pity. The whole affair,

he thought, could be but one of those aberrations of which youth is the victim, but which are dangerous just because youth prompts them. A shrewd guess named sentiment and sympathy as the parents of this morbid abasement. Let the truth be known and the affair would be forgotten in a week.

Some such argument as this had been in his head since he quitted Vienna; but it was forgotten at the gate of Jajce, where new speculations took its place. For one thing, he was quite sure that he had been followed from the town of Travnik by two plausible ruffians, who had endeavoured to inveigle him, at the inn door, into argument concerning their horses, and had plainly followed him thence upon the high-road to the mountains. Now, however, at dusk they had suddenly disappeared—a fact which the Earl liked less than the other.

"Have the passports ready," he commanded the valet Edward, when he had reflected that if he were followed to the city, he might very well identify these meddlesome people. He was obeyed immediately, and the carriage went at a gallop over the bridge which Mahomet the Second built, and so to that ancient gate which none who has passed it is likely to forget.

An old Turk opened to them, and they drove on beneath a narrow arch of the ramparts, which are here tunnelled to form a waiting-room and to harbour a fine old fellow, who keeps a monster coffee-pot ever on the boil and offers a cup to every new-comer. The hotel itself, built within twenty paces of the cascade, owes much to a Government which first controlled and then annexed these desirable provinces; and here the busiest of welcomes awaited so distinguished a guest as his Excellency the Englishman. Bustling maids and a manager in shirt-sleeves testified to the pleasant anticipation of guldens on the morrow and lofty patronage. A dinner graced by trout from the river, excellent mutton from the hills, and the famous coffee of the true East, surpassed all expectation. Amblehurst readily admitted their qualities, and having lighted a cigar which was not made in Turkey, he went out upon the terrace to enjoy the superb beauty of the night and a scene unsurpassed in all the world.

Above him, far above, Jajce's citadel stood out clearly silhouetted against the azure sky. Thence downwards were the twinkling lights of the long, white houses, shining as stars against an immense background of stately mountain. Guest-houses in the Turkish fashion supplied discordant music of reedy organs and plaintive violins. The stream added her cadence; the cascade thundered ever with that melancholy suggestion of eternal combat and merciless descent which strikes as a dirge upon the tired ear. The night alone, the night of forest and garden, offered her sweet silence as a tribute of enchanting contrast. For this the visitor was grateful, and strolling away from the hotel, he fell to speculation concerning the morrow and the after days when he would return to Ulusia von Erlach.

That nothing profitable could attend his present venture he had been sure from the outset. Had there been any truth in this wild story, eager tongues would have told it long years ago. Nevertheless, a mystery remained and could not but interest him. At the monastery he might or might not be able to unravel it; but in any case he would be able to enjoy the friendship with Ulusia to which such an embassy gave him the title; and reflecting upon the possibilities of this, he went to his bedroom in some content and dropped almost immediately into that profound sleep of which youth alone is the master.

A profound sleep truly, and yet not without its dreams. Of these the most real was that wherein he found himself standing as in a vision by the brink of the cataract and watching its eternal waters splaying and whirling in the rocky pool below; while as he stood there he was conscious of a presence which would have hurled him down headlong. This was so real, his struggle with the unseen assassin so violent, that he started up from his bed, to discover a waning night and also to become aware that someone had just quitted his room, while his books and papers lay scattered about the floor in a pleasant disorder which suggested both haste and curiosity. Had he been up an instant earlier, he would have caught the fellow, he thought, for he heard the door click as he awoke, and could almost have counted the footsteps in the corridor. As it was, he drew the blinds and remained a little while by the open window watching the glorious dawn, and the play of sunlight upon the torrent which appeared to fall sheer beneath his very windows.

He was followed, then, according to the fashion of the East, spied upon already, and a marked man. The risks of this embassy had not troubled him suggestively before, but now he began to reckon with and yet to

make light of them. If this intruder had been a common thief, he would not have troubled about books and papers while so many valuable trinkets lay on the dressing-table. Amblehurst came instantly to the conclusion that those who would perpetuate the existing state of things at Rabka were responsible for this espionage, though how it could serve them he neither knew nor cared. A reader of simple tastes, he remembered with a smile that his library of travel contained nothing more dangerous than a work upon the Carpathians and some half-a-dozen modern novels; while as for his papers, they referred largely to the first spring meeting at Newmarket, and its financial consequences.

He did not sleep again after this, but summoning his valet at an early hour, ordered the horses immediately, while he wrote a brief letter of explanation to the prefect of the city begging him to forgo the customary formalities. At eight o'clock he was in the saddle, and an hour later he rode up to the brink of the lake on the far bank of which stands the monastery of Jezero.

His party consisted of his two servants, the guide from the hotel, and the ragged escort of soldiers upon which the authorities insisted. The scene surpassed all he had heard of Jajce and its environment, nor did it suggest in any way the momentary foreboding of which he had been conscious. He had but an hour to go to learn whether Ulusia von Erlach were still the mistress of her own house or must make way for another. Thereafter he would return, though to what reward or hope of this emprise even his self-assurance might not say.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE MONK ARTHUR.

A VERY old porter opened the wicket and asked who came. When he heard that an Englishman stood at the door, he admitted him immediately.

There never was a monastery more magnificently situated than this. Such had been Amblehurst's first thought when he looked down to the lake gleaming in the sunshine, to the swift-running river which fed it, and the environment of majestic green mountains and far-stretching forest. Remote and enchanting, it spoke of a mediæval age; but its priests wore hard bowler hats with their habits, and never had he remarked an odder contrast.

"I wish to see your Prior," he said to the porter in German, and was answered in the same tongue that his Excellency's message should be delivered at once.

And so to a little waiting-room, chilling and bare, with a picture of the Crucifixion upon its walls, and a crimson geranium upon a bare wooden table for its one gleam of colour. Here a young priest offered liqueur from a glass-cut bottle—a fiery potion which should have been brewed in the very depths of Hades. Amblehurst conveniently emptied his glass into the flower-pot when the priest's back was turned and asked another question.

"The brother who was called Arthur, is he here, reverence?" But the priest shook his head. He had neither German nor French.

The tongue of the nod and sign is never an inspiring one, and frequently becomes ridiculous. Amblehurst, in truth, surrendered the adventure at an early moment, and was gazing idly down to the lake when the porter returned and said that the Prior awaited them in his cell. This lay across a wide courtyard at whose centre stood a fine stone canopy guarding a monstrously deep well. A few monks, idling with buckets, became very busy at the visitor's approach; they had seen but two Englishmen in twenty years, and this Englishman stood to them for all the fabled grandeur of the West. When he had passed into the Prior's cell, they told each other strange stories of his country—how that women are still bought and sold there as at any slave-market, and gold is so abundant that you may pick it up in the very streets. Thus goes our reputation in the mountains of Bosnia; these are the fables they believe.

Amblehurst meanwhile found himself in a poor cell on the further side of the courtyard, confronted by a dark-skinned man, apparently of forty years of age, who received him with much dignity and little speech and was plainly disconcerted by his visitor's candour.

"I have come to find out the truth about one of your brethren," said the Englishman with some bluntness. "He was for many years a missioner in the salt-mines at Rabka and was known there as Brother Arthur. You can tell me, Prior, whether he be alive or dead?"

He put the question with an entire absence of rhodomontade, assumed what nonchalance he could, and yet was aware that he waited for the priest's reply with something more nearly approaching excitement than any emotion of which he had been conscious

for some months past. Truly was it impossible to forget what this day might mean to the mistress of the Erlach Palace, whose house and fortune lay trembling in the balance. Amblehurst understood women well enough to hope that his mission might prove a failure.

"I remember Brother Arthur coming to us," the Prior said at length. "It was not from Rabka, but from Sebenico. I understood he was in the monastery there some three years. Representations from Vienna influenced his journey. He had hoped to return to the mine, but our superiors would not permit."

"Being persuaded to that course by those whose interests were in Brother Arthur's keeping. I understand that perfectly. And now, Prior, with your permission, I will see Brother Arthur."

The priest looked up as though his face had been slapped.

"You will see him—— But have not they told you——"

"They have told me he is dead. Agreed. But perceive, I have chosen not to believe them—an opinion which is shared by the high authorities at Vienna who are now engaged upon Brother Arthur's affairs."

"I do not understand you, Excellency. What affairs have to do with one of my monks, who is not longer of the world nor interested in worldly matter?"

"They have much to do, Prior, since they concern a man's life and a woman's fortune. I come to you as a friendly ambassador; but be sure there will be others less friendly. Should the Courts have reason to suspect that this man is being kept out of the way——"

A flush of blood came to the Prior's pale cheeks.

"This is not just to me!" he exclaimed sharply. "Do you know the brother of whom you are talking? Ah, I perceive that you do not. Please, then, to postpone your unfavourable judgment of us until some things are explained."

"Then you admit that the brother is alive——"

The Prior shrugged his shoulders.

"You shall be the judge of that," he said quietly.

He was standing now, and the young priest had been summoned to the apartment. Whispering a few words in Bosnian to him, the Prior led the way from the cell across the courtyard to a low building thrust out towards the lakeside and entirely surrounded by a wall of stone. The door of this he unlocked with a massive key and bade Amblehurst to follow him. "This is our infirmary," he said quietly. "I am sorry to say that Brother Arthur has been an inmate of it for the last four years."

Amblehurst knew not what to reply. Some suspicion of the truth fascinated him and set him to a hundred speculations. Much that had been misunderstood in the story of Jura the Wise became plain in that instant. He could say why this strange claim to the mastership of the mine had lain dormant, why none had heard of it, why Rudolph of Trieste had treated it so contemptuously. The arbiter of fortune dwelt in this house of silence. How if he himself could no longer speak?

They entered a cell, lighted by a narrow window in a wall of grey stone, and there the Prior turned again to his guest.

"My brother is here," he said in a low voice; "but he is quite blind, Excellency, and a very old man, as you see."

Amblehurst took a step forward and instantly perceived a white-haired old man sitting in a low chair by the window and lifting sightless eyes towards the mountains. The whispered words spoken by the Prior did not attract his attention or cause him to turn his head. When he was addressed, he stretched out a hand as though to touch that of his questioner, but made no other response.

"Will he understand me if I speak in German?" Amblehurst asked. The Prior assented with an inclination of the head.

"He used to speak five languages, but his memory has gone with his sight. Do you not understand now why we call him dead to the world? It is the truth, Excellency, and you will do us the justice to make it known in Vienna."

"I shall lose no time in doing so. May I speak with the brother, Prior?"

"As your Excellency pleases. Your generosity will spare him should you discover your errand to be useless."

"You may rely upon me; and perhaps my interrogation is to be preferred to that of the lawyers. May I ask you to introduce me?"

The Prior smiled.

"I am afraid that is beyond my powers, but I will mention your name, Excellency."

"Mention rather the name of my friend—he is known at Rabka as Jura the Wise."

"Will it be familiar to our brother?"

"I think and hope so."

The Prior stepped forward and, speaking in low, deep tones of the German language, he endeavoured to awaken the blind monk's interest. When some glimmer of recognition showed itself upon a face hitherto expressionless, he withdrew with his assistant and left guest and priest alone. Now, indeed, the wonderful silence of that house fell upon Amblehurst as an omen. He could not even hear a human footstep. Not a sound came down from the mountains; the lake shone in the sunshine as a golden mirror, burnished and unruffled. He might have been in a house of the dead—alone with the last who had perished in a place of woe.

It was but a momentary impression, and when it had passed, a resolution of his vanity prompted him to new zeal in his task and a mastering determination to accomplish it. He must recall this moribund and pathetic figure to life, reanimate it, breathe into it the spirit of forgotten years. Drawing a chair to the old man's side, he began to speak in low tones of the mine at Rabka and of its people. He mentioned the name Jura and dwelt upon it. His own recent acquaintance with the amazing story of what Vienna would soon call the "conspiracy" handicapped him sorely. He was a stammerer, but one whose earnestness none could have doubted.

And what was his reward?

The old priest listened patiently to this vehement declamation, though he gave no sign that he comprehended it. From time to time he put out a hand and stroked that of his interrogator, but the act failed to inspire him to speech, nor would it appear that he was aware even of the subject of the interrogation. In vain Amblehurst repeated the story, uttered the familiar names, spoke of Rabka and its new mistress. A sigh was his reward. This old man, he said, gazed upon the mountains as though the very sunshine, which fell upon his withered eyes, would reopen them and give him sight.

For this, then, the Englishman had travelled across Austria to these remote mountains, to attain a goal, as it were, upon the brink of an open grave, and to be mocked by the silence of the living dead. In vain he tried another tongue, recapitulated the story in French and dwelt once more upon its essentials. The old monk still sat and gazed upon the distant mountains, nor uttered a single word of recognition. The names neither of people nor of places appeared to have meaning for him; he could be moved by no entreaty, awakened by no ruse. Even the younger man's patience surrendered at last, and believing that nothing was to be gained by any further attempt, he rose to bid the monk farewell; and rising, he heard with new astonishment the old priest's voice for the first time.

"What is your name, my son?"

Amblehurst seated himself instantly.

These simple words fascinated him beyond all expression. He had been understood, then, after all. The silence had been but a subterfuge. And now the priest would speak. He felt convinced of it.

"I am called Lord Amblehurst in England."

"What do you know of the mine at Rabka?"

"The Countess von Erlach is my friend——"

"Are you going to marry her?"

Shrewd insight. This man, hidden from the world for twenty years, needed no eyes to spy out the truth.

"That is my intention, father."

"Then a claim to the mine has been set up by another?"

"By one who calls himself Jura the Wise and is known as your pupil."

"It is true—he lived in my house for ten years—I called him son."

"While he claims to be the son of the Count Philip."

"It is true—he was the lord Philip's son."

"Have you papers to prove this story?"

"They are here in this room—they have never left my keeping."

"Then you are prepared to come to Vienna and to tell your story?"

The priest made no answer. A sudden flush of blood coloured his cheeks, and his lips quivered.

"I am a very old man, my lord. I have no strength for such a journey."

"But at least you will help us to make the truth known?"

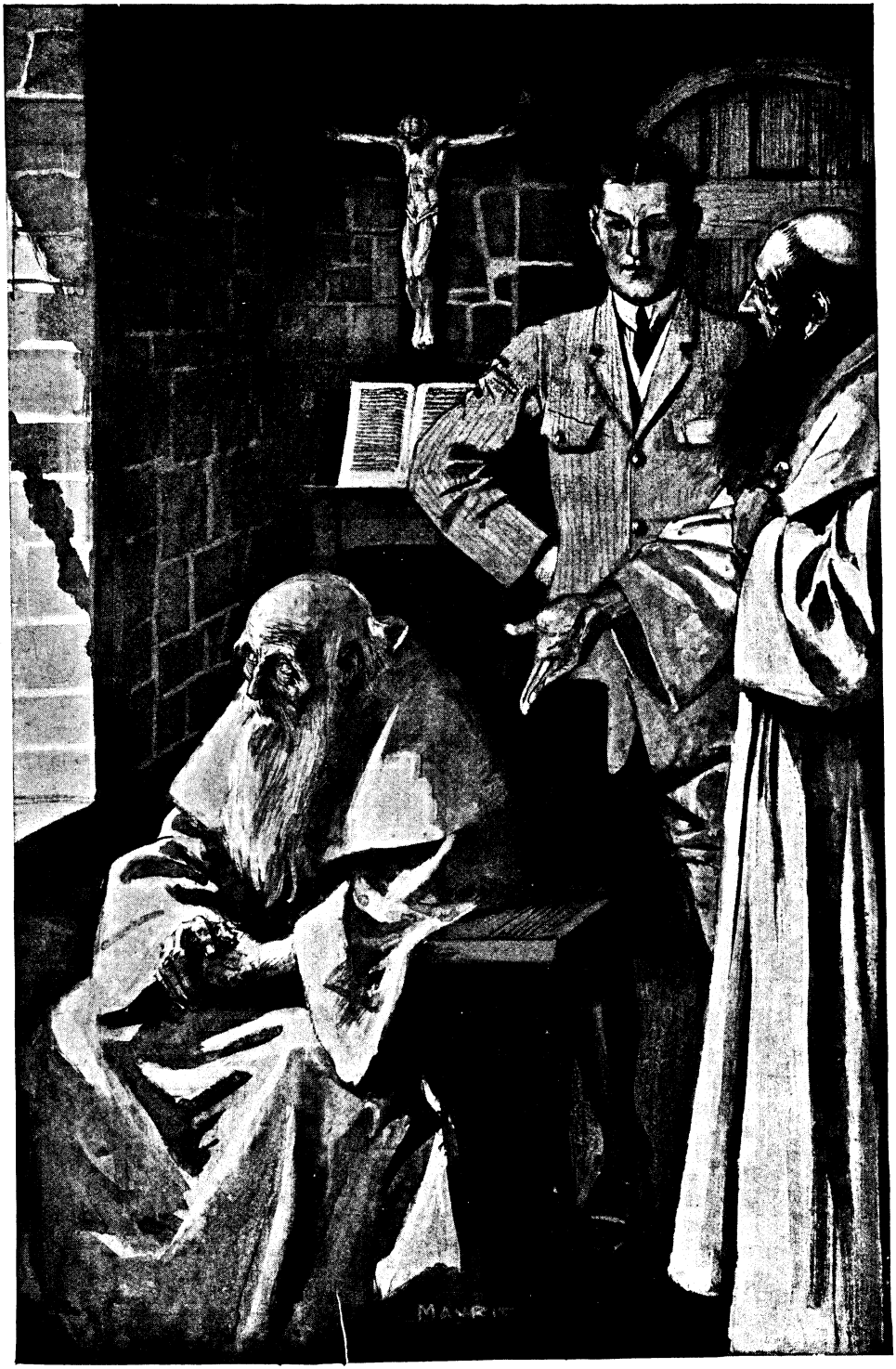
The priest shook his head a little sadly.

"They would not listen to an old man. The day has gone by, my lord—leave me here in peace."

"But, father, you owe it to yourself and to your faith. If you have these papers, they must be given up. You must make an effort to come to Vienna and to tell your story in Court. Do you not understand that if this claim is put forward and fails, those who make it will be severely punished? I cannot believe that you would suffer that."

Again a heavy sigh attended the question.

"No claim should be made, my lord—it will fail. I am an old man and cannot support it. The day has gone by for that.



"The Monk, Arthur."

Let them treat the young man well—he deserves it. I cannot hear you further—it would not avail. Leave me, I beg of you."

"I will certainly do so, father. But you will permit me to come again?"

"Yes, yes; when I am better, come again."

His hands dropped upon his lap and he sank back as one overwhelmed by the effort. Plainly he would speak no more this day; nor had the duologue been without pain to him. As for the Englishman, his curiosity waxed hot and could hardly be suppressed. He felt as a man who has touched a treasure with his finger-tips, but to be thrown back by a jest of Fate which mocked him. What, in Heaven's name, was the truth? Why did this old man, who had surely no hope of this world, fear to tell it?

But this was beyond him to say, and with a brief word of farewell he quitted the cell and the monastery and went out to find his servants.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PIETRO RITZI.

THE prefect of the city was at the hotel of Jajce when Amblehurst returned there about one o'clock of the day, and he hastened to excuse himself for so tardy an appearance.

"My instructions led me to expect your Excellency to-day," he said. "Vienna did not anticipate such despatch. But anything that I can do for your Excellency, should you desire to see the city or my province, to fish, or to shoot, shall be done. Pray command me as you will."

Amblehurst hastened to assure him that such amusements were, for the time being, at any rate, out of the question. Since secrecy in this affair could help no one, he told the prefect frankly why he had come to Bosnia.

"There is a monk in the monastery of Jezero, who can be of some assistance to my friend the Countess von Erlach," he said. "I came to see him, but have been greatly disappointed, for he is a very old man and quite blind. Do you know the Benedictines, prefect—have you visited their monastery?"

The prefect, a very fat man of the world, who treated all monks in a spirit of harmless jest, shook his head smilingly.

"While they do not trouble me, I do not trouble them," he said. "As it chances, there is news from Vienna concerning these people to-day, and I am commanded to visit the monastery and to send Brother Arthur to Vienna. So, you see, our purpose is the same. I do not pretend to know the object of these instructions; but your Excellency will understand that I shall carry them out immediately, and that if you desire to see the priest again, you must look for him at Vienna and not in Bosnia."

The news did not surprise Amblehurst. It had been patent to him from the beginning that his own mission could achieve little, and that the Courts would soon take this burden upon their own shoulders. Perhaps he felt some chagrin at the thought of the poor service he had done Ulusia, after all, and the very moderate title it gave him to her gratitude. His own determination was to return to Vienna by the earliest train possible, and to tell her very frankly that the monk's evidence would not establish the claims of her *protégé* and might finally defeat them. What she would do under such circumstances he could not so much as imagine, but his wit perceived that the ultimate issue lay with the man, and that his punishment might be the very worst thing that could happen.

"She will make a martyr of him and devote her life to his story," he thought as he said "Good-bye" to the prefect and went into the hotel for lunch. The train to Travnik started at six o'clock that night, they told him, from the station at Jajce; but he could drive across country if he chose, and catch the night mail from Serajevo to the capital, a course to which the prefect had advised him, and upon which he decided finally. A great desire to return to Vienna, to hear Ulusia's resolution, and to be ready for every emergency, rebelled against the remoteness of this beautiful city and its seclusion. He knew that he could not rest until his message were delivered.

Meanwhile there was the interval of waiting, a long interval, since the horses of yesterday were by no means fit for the journey of to-day; nor was it until four of the afternoon that a dishevelled hotel-keeper could supply the necessary substitutes and announce, with a sudden protestation upon the loyalty of his efforts, that the equipages were ready.

As for Amblehurst, he had spent the time alternately between the wonderful terrace above the cascade and the mediæval street which is Jajce's Corso. Both fascinated him; the street by its impressive suggestion of age and history; the terrace by its superb revelations of natural beauty and the ever changing aspect of the leaping waters upon

which it looked. Here upon the brink had he stood last night and dreamed the dream. He knew not why it was, but standing upon the same spot, alert and surely very wide awake, the Eastern sun beating down upon him, the rocky gorge alive with the play and counterplay of the spreading torrent, the sensations of his sleep returned to him without warning, and all the dread and horror of the dream possessed him once more.

He was there, and a hand was outstretched to cast him down headlong. Peering as one fascinated into the depths, he could imagine his body bounding down to the jagged rocks, his flesh torn by the merciless spikes, his bones crushed and broken ere the water engulfed them. What was more wonderful was this, that he, who feared no man, was dumb and helpless in the presence of this unseen peril. He could not stir from the place, could not lift a hand to save himself; but must rock to and fro, sick with fear and yielding to the call of tragedy.

From this trance, awakening came with dramatic suddenness—he made a mighty effort, cast the spell off almost with a cry of pain, and turning, discovered that a man stood at his elbow and watched him with eyes so curious and such an odd expression of interest and malice upon his face that no doubt of his will, if not of his intention, could remain.

"Pardon me, my lord, but that is a dangerous place."

Amblehurst stepped back from the wall and regarded this man with amazed curiosity. He was one of the two who had attempted to inveigle him into an argument at the hotel at Travnik—a short, black-bearded Italian, who smoked a long cigar held between bird-like talons, and wore a smile which could have won him a fortune upon any stage of villains. To accuse the fellow of offence were impossible. He had made no overt movement, uttered no threat, had been guilty of no act which could accuse him. And yet Amblehurst could not disabuse himself of the idea that in another instant he himself would have been hurled headlong to the depths below. Reaction found him almost unnerved. He addressed the man, despite his aversion from strange acquaintance.

"Is my safety anything to you, sir?"

"Pardon me, my lord, it is much. But I see that your lordship forgets me?"

"You were at Travnik yesterday; you wished to speak to me."

"Certainly—to warn your lordship. But I will remind you of another occasion. Three years ago, on the Riva degli Schiavoni at Venice, a woman claimed your lordship's protection. Do you remember that?"

Amblehurst looked at him astonished.

"Certainly, I remember a foolish brawl——"

"That woman was my sister. Your lordship owes to the fact another"—here he flicked off the ash of his cigar and permitted it to fall down the chasm—"that you are talking to me upon this terrace."

"Do you mean——"

"I beg your lordship's pardon. The good fortune is mine. I should have been premature, very premature. Indeed, had an accident occurred, it would have been a grave error, since you can neither help nor hinder us. Your lordship returns to Vienna to-day, I think. Be under no concern, for I also am taking the train from Serajevo."

Amblehurst laughed. The impudence of it amazed him.

"Suppose I have you arrested upon your own confession?"

It was the Italian's turn to be amused.

"Oh!" he said, "but your lordship is anxious to return to Vienna. Would you wait three days in the mountains to accuse a poor devil of an Italian who has just saved your lordship from an ugly accident? I am sure you would not—and Pietro Ritzi is a judge of men, my lord."

"And this judge decides that the object for which I came to the mountains has failed."

"I am sure of it, my lord—has failed so lamentably that in three days the object of it will be a prisoner at Vienna, while the priest who sends him there will have ceased to live."

Amblehurst started back.

"A prophet also, it appears. Shall I say a dangerous prophet?"

"Nothing of the kind, my lord. The matter is nothing to me—my work is done; but remember when the time comes and then compliment me. I wish your lordship *bon voyage*."

He lifted his hat ceremoniously and turned back towards the hotel. The Englishman, on his part, knew not what to make of it. His first thought was to seek out the prefect and relate this adventure; his second to leave the matter where it was.

That violence would be attempted upon the old priest he could not conceive, especially after the emphatic declaration that the claim could not be established. This Italian he set down for a mere boaster, a

pretty tinsel villain who happened to be the brother of the little Italian girl about whom rogues were fighting on the Riva degli Schiavoni three years ago. His grandiloquent talk deserved no serious notice.

Faith in this conclusion took him from the town of Jajce with a livelier desire to return to Vienna than any he had yet experienced. The wild journey to Travnik he found inexpressibly wearisome—the discomforts of the mountain railway, with its narrow gauge, its snorting locomotive, and the never-ending river valley it followed, appeared almost insupportable. In vain he sought sleep as the train rumbled on through the long hours of the night. When the dawn came, and the sun, full and magnificently red, leaped up above the rim of the mountains, he abandoned the effort to rest and was about to take a book from his bag when the door of his sleeping-compartment was opened stealthily, and without any word of explanation the Italian, Pietro Ritzi, entered from the corridor.

"Your pardon, my lord. We shall be at Brod in half an hour. I have something to say before we get there—with your lordship's permission."

Amblehurst bade him sit down on the narrow couch and offered him a cigarette. He was no longer afraid of this man, although he suspected his intention. To-day he looked a very harmless little fellow, sere and yellow, after a laborious night, but unfailingly good-humoured.

"This cursed railway is one of Austria's apologies for annexing Bosnia," he said with a laugh. "The representatives of the Powers should be compelled to spend a day on it; I venture to say that would be an end of the Eastern Question."

Amblehurst laughed.

"You are difficult to please; have you found it so trying a journey?"

"Far from it. It will earn me—let me see—in your money five hundred pounds."

"Which you are paid by the Count Rudolph——"

"Precisely so. An able man, my lord, a very able man. He has made but one mistake in a distinguished career—he did not marry the Countess Ulusia."

Amblehurst lifted his brows.

"Undoubtedly an oversight. But there is time." The Italian leered.

"True, her Excellency may not have been willing. I imagine it was so. But, my lord, is it not the greatest achievement in life to marry a woman against her will?"

"Admittedly; but sometimes a little costly. Did you come here to speak about this?"

"Oh, certainly not. I came here to discuss a man in whom you are interested—they call him Jura the Wise at Rabka."

"Well?"

"And believe that he is the son of the lord Philip, her Excellency's uncle."

He flicked off the ash from his cigarette and appeared to await a question.

When none was put, he continued with equal assurance—

"And they are correct in their belief, my lord; but few would guess the truth."

"Meaning that it is a shameful story?"

"Oh, nothing of the kind. It is a very interesting story, and it is known but to two people. One is the priest at Jezero; he will never tell it. The other is your very faithful servant, who will tell it for a consideration, to you alone, my lord."

Amblehurst smiled. He had dealt with this kind of man before.

"Why do you think I am a purchaser?"

"Because, my lord, the day will come when you will be glad to tell it to her Excellency the Countess. Reflect upon it at your leisure. I am to be found at the Hôtel d'Italie in the Rossauer Kaserne any time your lordship may be pleased to seek me. I think the time will come—when the man is arrested and the priest is dead, my lord."

He waited for no reply, but, doffing his hat, once more passed out into the corridor and was gone. At the same moment the train entered the frontier station of Brod. Here they were to change into the Vienna express, which a monster ferry was to tow across the River Save before it set out upon its swift journey to Buda and the capital.

They would arrive at nightfall, Amblehurst remembered; in time for him to change and visit Ulusia at the Palace. But what would be the moment of that meeting, or what story he must hear upon his arrival, he could not so much as imagine.

The hours indeed were precious; but whether to him or to another, the day alone could tell.

(*To be concluded.*)

On the Difficulty of Obtaining String.

By HELEN VERNET.



WANTED string.

For days I had wanted string. You know how annoying it is to have sundry small parcels to do up, and no *suitable* string. String of sorts I had in plenty, kept higgledy-piggledy in the writing-table drawer, but some was too thick and some too thin; there were pieces too short and pieces too long, knotted up inextricably. Yes, I certainly wanted string.

A brilliant idea struck me; I would go out and buy some!

I put on my hat and gloves, wound my boa round my neck, seized my parasol, and sallied forth.

I walked straight out down the street facing me; it is a sunny, airy, silent street, and always reminds me of some pleasant seaside terrace. The houses on the right-hand side are tall and old-fashioned; their doorsteps are always immaculately white, their windows always bright. It lies no higher than the streets surrounding, but gives one the impression of being "perched up," overlooking, as it were, the noisy beach of Bond Street which lies below. Never have I seen anyone go in or out of the houses, but this only adds a pleasing touch of mystery. It is a quiet, self-contained street and requires no company!

Quite at the end there is a narrow alley. Down this I wandered, and there I saw my shop.

A small, low shop with but one window, and that window full, packed from sill to ceiling with a varied assortment of ink-pots, blotting-paper, labels, and account books. Certainly *the* place for string. I gave the door at the side a little shove and went in. It was almost dark inside and quite empty. As soon as my eyes got accustomed to the gloom, I saw that a large, solid-looking counter ran at right angles across the shop, with a lift-up flap at one end. Behind was a narrow space, and beyond that shelves and shelves, crowded up, like the little window, with hundreds and hundreds of miscellaneous objects piled one upon the other in a state of inextricable confusion. A thick pall of dust lay over everything.

Coming suddenly out of the clean, bright sunlight into this little, dirty, musty shop gave me a physical feeling of ill-ease. I shuffled nervously with my feet and rapped loudly on the counter with the handle of my parasol. A child appeared. I say "appeared" because I shall never know how she got there; a very ugly child, almost the ugliest I have ever seen. I suppose she was really about ten or eleven, but the vice and crime of countless generations since Adam and Eve were turned out of their beauteous shrubbery seemed to have left their traces on her face. Her fair hair was tightly woven in two long plaits which reached to her waist, and the rest of it, the short part, was screwed up tightly over her head in various coloured bits of dirty paper. She wore a dark blue cotton frock and a very grubby apron. Her face was pasty, her eyes pink-rimmed, and she squinted horribly—oh, horribly!

"What do you want?" she asked. "Please."

The "please" was evidently added as an afterthought.

Her right eye watched the far corner, as if waiting for some weird animal to come out from its lair; the left one just glanced at me with a malicious twinkle in its depths.

"I want some string," I said boldly.

"'Ow much?" she asked.

"How much?" I repeated vaguely to myself; how much? and how does one ask for string? Memories of my childhood flashed across me, and I seemed to hear my governess saying: "You should always ask for and describe what you want correctly. You should say, a '*flock* of sheep,' a '*herd* of cattle,' a '*brace* of partridges,' a '*pair* of horses,' a '*sack* of corn,' a '*ton* of coal,' a——"

"'*Ow much?*" repeated the child again sharply.

I gave a little start. Desperately I tried to collect my thoughts. *What* does one say? Does one say a *pound* of string, a *yard* of string, an *ell* of string, a—I have it! A *ball* of string!

"A ball of string," I cried triumphantly. "I want a ball of string."

The child's right eye from the far corner swerved on to me with startling abruptness.

"Of course," she said contemptuously, "a ball of string. But 'ow much? Farthing, 'apenny, penny, tuppence, thruppence, fourpence, fivepence, sixpence, sevenpence——" She seemed to be going on indefinitely. I made a dash for it.

"Threepence," I said firmly. "I want a ball of string for threepence, please."

She disappeared. I gave a gasp. At first I thought she had gone through a trap-door in the floor; that her demon relatives below had seized her by the toes and dragged her down. I leaned a little further over the counter and peered down into the dusk. The space behind was empty. No, there was no trap-door; there never could have been one, because over the bare boards ran a faded strip of dingy carpet.

I drew back and glanced nervously behind me. She reappeared! The mystery was explained. The counter on which I leaned, though apparently solid on *my* side, was hollow on hers, like a gigantic box with its side out. Being small, she had merely ducked her head and stepped inside.

She dumped down a dark, treacly, unpleasant-looking object on the counter before me.

"That's what you want," she said authoritatively, and there was no mistaking the malicious twinkle this time. "Thruppence, please."

She made no effort to wrap it up.

For a moment I looked at it helplessly. Then I opened my purse, put three coppers on the counter, grabbed my burden, and hurried out.

I hurried out; back, up the narrow alley; back, into the sunlit street, and only after I had gone a hundred yards did I pause for breath and take a glance down at my bundle.

It was, as I had thought, perfectly hopeless. No sane human being could ever want string like that! Coarse, fibrous-looking stuff, thick as my little finger, and covered over with a sort of sticky gum or varnish which even now in the warm sunlight was beginning to melt and stain my gloves a dismal-looking ochre. "You've been a fool, my dear," I said to myself, "and gone and wasted threepence." I tried to think of some comforting anecdote about some good and great man like Gladstone, Disraeli, or Nelson, or Bonaparte, who had wasted threepence and yet made it a stepping-stone to fame and fortune! But in vain. I walked slowly on, and presently a small voice within me whispered—

"Don't take it home, don't take it home



"Her right eye watched the far corner . . . the left one just glanced at me."



"Right into them, still walking backwards, went the butcher boy."

You've been a fool and wasted threepence, but no one need know." "What shall I do with it?" I asked myself.

"Throw it down an area," said the voice within. "*No one need know.*"

I glanced hastily up and down the street; no one was in sight. The very house I was passing had two large placards in the window: "This house to be let or sold." "Keys at Messrs. Garland and Smith." Good. I peeped into the area. Two or three dirty pieces of paper and some wisps of straw drifting aimlessly around. Stealthily I raised my bundle; there was a faint stir down below in the far corner, and two baleful, luminous green eyes stared straight at me with an intense look of concentrated hate. Involuntarily I recoiled a pace; the eyes moved forward. I moved up a few steps. The animal did not move again, but the head turned, and the eyes, with their look of lurid hate, followed me and said as plainly as if shouted: "Don't you dare to throw anything down *this* area!"

I didn't. I walked on baffled, but only for a moment. Higher up the street there is a house taller and narrower than its neighbours, with a portico; two slender grey stone pillars run down from a tiny balcony to the doorstep, with an alcove on either side. This was the place. Another hurried glance up and down the street, a moment's pause until I had seen two prosperous gentlemen safely disappear within the august portals of a famous tailor, and then I nimbly mounted the steps, placed my ball of string on the stone coping, and stepped back into the street. I glanced back, *too late;* a butcher's boy, coming up from the area of the house next door, had seen all! He stood halfway up the narrow iron ladder, his tray swinging on one shoulder, his mouth half open, and a look of horrified astonishment and vivid curiosity on his round face.

Slowly, very slowly and disdainfully I walked on. What would he do? Would he call the police? Would he ring up the house? Would he say it was a bomb? I turned hot and cold, and the pavement seemed to sway.

I dared not look round. But if ever eyes were at the back of anybody's head, certainly mine were, and ears too! I heard him climb the area steps and shut the gate with a clang. I heard his feet hastening after me. Horror! I heard him mount the steps of the portico. *Now* he had found it. What would he do? There was a moment's silence, and then a whistle broke out—the first bars of "The Merry Widow" waltz. He almost ran past me, still whistling shrilly. Ten yards, twenty yards, on perhaps, he spun dexterously round on his heels, and, still whistling, began to walk backwards, regarding me fixedly all the time. How he

stared! Never has anyone stared at me like that! He began with the feather in my hat, and worked slowly down to my boots; the right one had a button off, I knew. He knew it too. With head erect and a hot spot burning on either cheek I walked steadily on. Would help never come?

We were nearing the end of the street when suddenly round the corner appeared an elderly gentleman walking with two girls. They were talking interestedly together, their heads slightly bent. A spasm of joy shot through me. I foresaw the result. It came.

Bang! right into them, still walking backwards, went the butcher-boy; the end of his tray caught the flapping hat of the youngest girl and rammed it down her back. She turned purple, throttled suddenly by the elastic. To save himself the boy caught at the old gentleman, and a violent altercation commenced. Gathering up my skirts, I scuttled (there is no other word for it) as fast as my legs and the clinging draperies designed for us by fashion would let me, down the first turning on the right, then to the left, and found myself, breathless and panting, in dear old Bond Street, dear, safe Bond Street, far away from silent, sunlit streets haunted by baleful, green-eyed monsters and impertinent butcher-boys.

Bond Street was crowded; a long line of carriages, motors, cabs, and vehicles of all descriptions proceeding at a foot pace. Here and there a frail cyclist clung to the side of an omnibus as a canoe might cling to the side of a friendly steam-tug going through a lock. The diamonds winked wickedly at me through the highly polished windows, gorgeous hats, bewildering petticoats passed me, pleasant-faced people politely jostled.

My spirits lifted, my heart rejoiced. "You've been a fool," I said, "and wasted threepence, but no one need know. You've got rid of it, but you want string, and you must get some more."

I loitered contentedly on until I reached my shop—a charming shop this. Stacks of delicately tinted notepaper are disposed in artistic confusion, interspersed with sticks of rainbow-coloured sealing-wax looking like luscious dreamland sweets.

And fluffy yellow chickens are there for you to wipe your pen on, if you have the heart! Really a charming shop. I stepped in briskly; a pleasant-faced young man smiled at me over the glass counter.

"I want," I said cheerfully, "a ball of string, not too thick, suitable for tying up small parcels, such as (my glance wandered vaguely round the shop)—such as packets of envelopes, or photo frames, or——"

"Just so, perfectly, madam," he interrupted.

He withdrew for a moment, and returned bearing in his hand a snow-white ball. It looked like carded wool. He placed it before me. "This is what you require," he said firmly. "Manufactured expressly for ladies' parcels. Very light, but strong, extra superfine twine." As he spoke he had deftly torn off a sheet of paper from a block hanging beside him, rolled the ball in it, and given the end a smart twist so that it looked like an over-ripe pear. He held it towards me stalk outwards.

"This is what you require," he repeated. "Sixpence, please."

I took out my purse once more, found the sixpence, grasped the stalk so graciously proffered me, and walked out.

I went straight home, unrolled my pear—I mean string—and put it on the writing-table before me. Yes, it was very nice, certainly, very nice indeed. "Snow-white, extra fine, beautiful *twine!*"

I gave a little sigh. I had wanted—oh, so badly!—just a ball of string.

THE SKYLARK.

IT was the skylark we heard
Singing so high,
The little quivering bird
We saw, and the sky.
The lark was drenched with sun,
The sky was drenched with song,
We lay in the grass and listened,
Long and long and long.

I said: "What a spell it is
Has made her rise
To pour out her world of bliss
In that world of skies!"
You said: "What a spell must pass
Between sky and plain,
Since she finds in this world of grass
Her nest again!"

E. NESBIT.

LAST BULL.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

THAT was what two grim old sachems of the Dacotahs had dubbed him; and though his official title, on the lists of the Zoological Park, was "Kaiser," the new and more significant name had promptly supplanted it. The Park authorities—people of imagination and of sentiment, as must all be who would deal successfully with wild animals—had felt at once that the name aptly embodied the tragedies and the romantic memories of his all-but-vanished race. They had felt, too, that the two old braves who had been brought east to adorn a city pageant, and who had stood gazing stoically for hours at the great bull buffalo through the barrier of the steel-wire fence, were fitted, before all others, to give him a name. Between him and them there was surely a tragic bond, as they stood there islanded among the swelling tides of civilisation which had already engulfed their kindreds. "Last Bull" they had called him, as he answered their gaze with little, sullen, melancholy eyes from under his ponderous and shaggy front. "Last Bull"—and the passing of his race was in the name.

Here, in his fenced, protected range, with a space of grassy meadow, half-a-dozen clumps of sheltering trees, two hundred yards of the run of a clear, unfailing brook, and a warm shed for refuge against the winter storms, the giant buffalo ruled his little herd of three tawny cows, two yearlings, and one blundering, butting calf of the season. He was a magnificent specimen of his race—surpassing, it was said, the finest bull in the Yellowstone preserves or in the guarded Canadian herd of the North. Little short of twelve feet in length, a good five feet ten in height at the tip of his humped and huge fore-shoulders, he seemed to justify the most extravagant tales of pioneer and huntsman. His hind-quarters were trim and fine-lined, built apparently for speed, smooth-haired, and of a greyish lion-colour. But his fore-shoulders, mounting to an enormous hump, were of an elephantine massiveness, and clothed in a dense, curling, golden-brown growth of matted hair. His mighty head was carried low, almost to the level of his knees, on a neck of colossal strength, which was draped, together with the forelegs, down to the knees, in a flowing brown mane tipped with black. His head, too, to the very muzzle, wore the same luxuriant and sombre drapery, out of which curved viciously the keen-tipped crescent of his horns. Dark, huge, and ominous, he looked curiously out of place in the secure and familiar tranquillity of his green pasture.

For a distance of perhaps fifty yards, at the back of the pasture, the range of the buffalo herd adjoined that of the moose, divided from it by that same fence of heavy steel-wire mesh, supported by iron posts, which surrounded the whole range. One sunny and tingling day in late October—such a day as makes the blood race full red through all healthy veins—a magnificent stranger was brought to the Park and turned into the moose-range.

The new-comer was a New Brunswick bull moose, captured on the Tobique during the previous spring when the snow was deep and soft, and purchased for the Park by one of the big Eastern lumber-merchants. The moose-herd had consisted, hitherto, of four lonely cows, and the splendid bull was a prize which the Park had long been coveting. He took lordly possession, forthwith, of the submissive little herd, and led them off at once from the curious crowds about the gate to explore the wild-looking thickets at the back of the pasture. But no sooner had he fairly entered these thickets than he found his further progress barred by the steel-meshed fence. This was a bitter disappointment, for he had expected to go striding through miles of alder swamp and dark spruce woods, fleeing the hated world of men and bondage, before setting himself to get acquainted with his new followers. His high-strung temper was badly jarred. He drew off, shaking his vast antlers, and went shambling with spacious stride down along the barrier towards the brook. The four

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cows, in single file, hurried after him anxiously, afraid he might be snatched away from them.

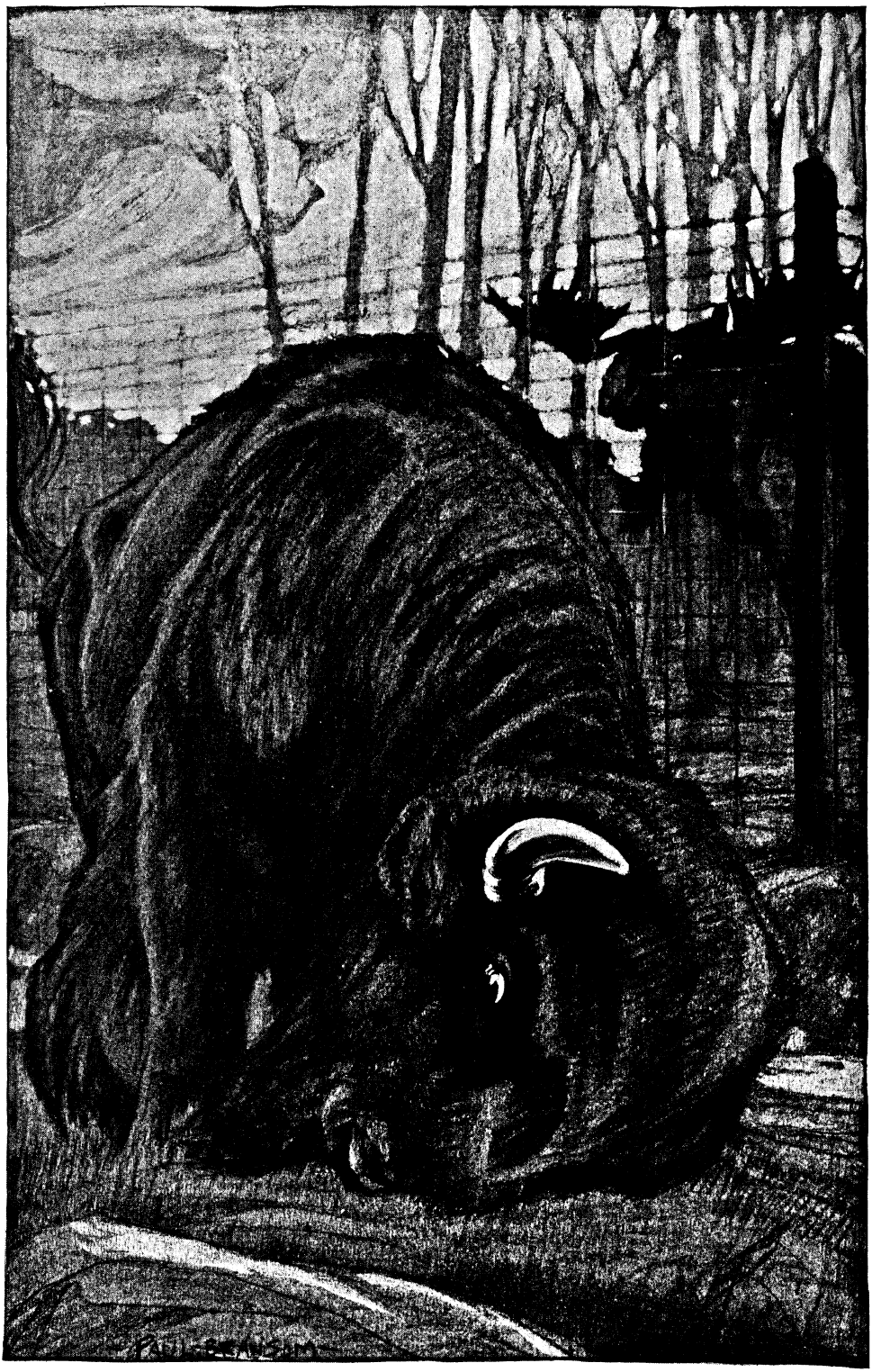
Last Bull, standing solitary and morose on a little knoll in his pasture, caught sight of the strange, dark figure of the running moose. A spark leapt into his heavy eyes. He wheeled, pawed the sod, put his muzzle to the ground, and bellowed a sonorous challenge. The moose stopped short and stared about him, the stiff hair lifting angrily along the ridge of his massive neck. Last Bull lowered his head and tore up the sod with his horns.

This vehement action caught the eyes of the moose. At first he stared in amazement, for he had never seen any creature that looked like Last Bull. The two were only about fifty or sixty yards apart, across the little valley of the bushy swamp. As he stared, his irritation speedily overcame his amazement. The curious-looking creature over there on the knoll was defying him, was challenging him. At this time of year his blood was hot and quick for any challenge. He gave vent to a short, harsh, explosive cry, more like a grumbling bleat than a bellow, and as unlike the buffalo's challenge as could well be imagined. Then he fell to thrashing the nearest bushes violently with his antlers. This, for some reason unknown to the mere human chronicler, seemed to be taken by Last Bull as a crowning insolence. His long, tasselled tail went stiffly up into the air, and he charged wrathfully down the knoll. The moose, with his heavy-muzzled head stuck straight out scornfully before him, and his antlers laid flat along his back, strode down to the encounter with a certain deadly deliberation. He was going to fight. There was no doubt whatever on that score. But he had not quite made up his wary mind as to how he would deal with this unknown and novel adversary.

They looked not so unequally matched, these two, the monarch of the western plains, and the monarch of the north-eastern forests. Both had something of the monstrous, the uncouth, about them, as if they belonged not to this modern day, but to some prehistoric epoch when Earth moulded her children on more lavish and less graceful lines. The moose was like the buffalo in having his hind-quarters relatively slight and low, and his back sloping upwards to a hump over the immensely developed fore-shoulders. But he had much less length of body, and much less bulk, though perhaps eight or ten inches more of height at the tip of the shoulder. His hair was short, and darker than that of his shaggy rival, being almost black except on legs and belly. Instead of carrying his head low, like the buffalo, for feeding on the level prairies, he bore it high, being in the main a tree-feeder. But the greatest difference between the two champions was in their heads and horns. The antlers of the moose formed a huge, fantastic, flatly palmated or leaflike structure, separating into sharp prongs along the edges, and spreading more than four feet from tip to tip. To compare them with the short, polished crescent of the horns of Last Bull was like comparing a two-handed broadsword to a bowie-knife. And his head, instead of being short, broad, ponderous, and shaggy, like Last Bull's, was long, close-haired, and massively horse-faced, with a projecting upper lip heavy and grim.

Had there been no impregnable steel barrier between them, it is hard to say which would have triumphed in the end, the ponderous weight and fury of Last Bull, or the ripping prongs and swift wrath of the moose. The buffalo charged down the knoll at a thundering gallop; but just before reaching the fence he checked himself violently. More than once or twice before had those elastic but impenetrable meshes given him his lesson, hurling him back with humiliating harshness when he dashed his bulk against them. He had too lively a memory of past discomfitures to risk a fresh one now in the face of this insolent foe. His matted front came against the wire with a force so cunningly moderated that he was not thrown back by the recoil. And the keen points of his horns went through the meshes with a vehemence which might indeed have done its work effectively had they come in contact with the adversary. As it was, however, they but prodded empty air.

The moose, meanwhile, had been in doubt whether to attack with his antlers, as was his manner when encountering foes of his own kind, or with his knife-edged fore-hoofs, which were the weapons he used against bears, wolves, or other alien adversaries. Finally he seemed to make up his mind that Last Bull, having horns and a most redoubtable stature, must be some kind of moose. In that case, of course, it became a question of antlers. Moreover, in his meetings with rival bulls it had never been his wont to depend upon a blind, irresistible charge—thereby leaving it open to an alert opponent to slip aside and rip him along the flank—but rather to fence warily for an advantage in the locking of antlers, and then bear down his



"This vehement action caught the eyes of the moose."

foe by the fury and speed of his pushing. It so happened, therefore, that he, too, came not too violently against the barrier. Loudly his vast spread of antlers clashed upon the steel meshes; and one short prong, jutting low over his brow, pierced through and furrowed deeply the matted forehead of the buffalo.

As the blood streamed down over his nostrils, obscuring one eye, Last Bull quite lost his head with rage. Drawing off, he hurled himself blindly upon the barrier—only to be hurled back again with a vigour that brought him to his knees. But at the same time the moose, on the other side of the fence, got a huge surprise. Having his antlers against the barrier when Last Bull charged, he was forced back irresistibly upon his haunches, with a rudeness quite unlike anything that he had ever before experienced. His massive neck felt as if a pine-tree had fallen upon it, and he came back to the charge quite beside himself with bewilderment and rage.

By this time, however, the keepers and Park attendants were arriving on the scene, armed with pitchforks and other unpleasant executors of authority. Snorting, and bellowing, and grunting, the monstrous duellists were forced apart; and Last Bull, who had been taught something of man's dominance, was driven off to his stable and imprisoned. He was not let out again for two whole days. And by that time another fence, parallel with the first and some five or six feet distant from it, had been run up between his range and that of the moose. Over this impassable zone of neutrality, for a few days, the two rivals flung insult and futile defiance, till suddenly, becoming tired of it all, they seemed to agree to ignore each other's existence.

After this, Last Bull's sullenness of temper appeared to grow upon him. He was fond of drawing apart from the little herd, and taking up his solitary post on the knoll, where he would stand for an hour at a time, motionless except for the switching of his long tail, and staring steadily westward as if he knew where the great past of his race had lain. In that direction a dense grove of chestnuts, maples, and oaks bounded the range, cutting off the view of the city roofs, the roar of the city traffic. Beyond the city were mountains and wide waters which he could not see; but beyond the waters and the mountains stretched the green, illimitable plains—which perhaps (who knows?) in some faint vision inherited from the ancestors whose myriads had possessed them, his sombre eyes, in some strange way, *could* see. Among the keepers and attendants generally it was said, with anxious regret, that perhaps Last Bull was "going bad." But the head-keeper, Payne, himself a son of the plains, repudiated the idea. *He* declared sympathetically that the great bull was merely homesick, pining for the wind-swept levels of the open country (God's country, Payne called it!) which his imprisoned hoofs had never trodden.

Be this as it may, the fact could not be gainsaid that Last Bull was growing more and more morose. The spectators, strolling along the wide walk which skirted the front of his range, seemed to irritate him, and sometimes, when a group had gathered to admire him, he would turn his low-hung head and answer their staring eyes with a kind of heavy fury, as if he burned to break forth upon them and seek vengeance for incalculable wrongs. This smouldering indignation against humanity extended equally, if not more violently, to all creatures who appeared to him as servants or allies of humanity. The dogs whom he sometimes saw passing, held in leash by their masters or mistresses, made him paw the earth scornfully if he happened to be near the fence. The patient horses who pulled the road-roller or the noisy lawn-mower made his eyes redden savagely. And he hated with peculiar zest the roguish little trick elephant, Bong, who would sometimes, his inquisitive trunk swinging from side to side, go lurching lazily by with a load of squealing children on his back.

Bong, who was a favoured character, amiable and trustworthy, was allowed the freedom of the Park in the early morning, before visitors began to arrive who might be alarmed by seeing an elephant at large. He was addicted to minding his own business, and never paid the slightest attention to any occupants of cage or enclosure. He was quite unaware of the hostility which he had aroused in the perverse and brooding heart of Last Bull.

One crisp morning in late November, when all the grass in the Park had been blackened by frost, and the pools were edged with silver rims of ice, and mists were white and saffron about the scarce-risen sun, and that autumn thrill was in the air which gives one such an appetite, Bong chanced to be strolling past the front of Last Bull's range. He did not see Last Bull, who was nothing to him. But, being just as hungry as he ought to be on so stimulating a

morning, he did see, and note with interest, some bundles of fresh hay on the other side of the fence.

Now, Bong was no thief. But hay had always seemed to him a free largess, like grass and water, and this looked like very good hay. So clear a conscience had he on the subject that he never thought of glancing around to see if any of the attendants were looking. Innocently he lurched up to the fence, reached his lithe trunk through, gathered a neat wisp of the hay, and stuffed it happily into his curious, narrow, pointed mouth. Yes, he had not been mistaken. It was good hay. With great satisfaction he reached in for another mouthful.

Last Bull, as it happened, was standing close by, but a little to one side. He had been ignoring, so far, his morning ration. He was not hungry. And, moreover, he rather disapproved of the hay, because it had the hostile man-smell strong upon it. Nevertheless, he recognised it very clearly as his property, to be eaten when he should feel inclined to eat it. His wrath, then, was only equalled by his amazement when he saw the little elephant's presumptuous grey trunk reach in and coolly help itself. For a moment he forgot to do anything whatever about it. But when, a few seconds later, that long, curling trunk of Bong's insinuated itself again and appropriated another bundle of the now precious hay, the outraged owner bestirred himself. With a curt roar, that was more of a cough or a grunt than a bellow, he lunged forward and strove to pin the intruding trunk to the ground.

With startled alacrity Bong withdrew his trunk, but just in time to save it from being mangled. For an instant he stood with the member held high in air, bewildered by what seemed to him such a gratuitous attack. Then his twinkling little eyes began to blaze and he trumpeted shrilly with anger. The next moment, reaching over the fence, he brought down the trunk on Last Bull's hump with such a terrible, flail-like blow that the great buffalo stumbled forward upon his knees.

He was up again in an instant and hurling himself madly against the inexorable steel which separated him from his foe. Bong hesitated for a second, then, reaching over the fence once more, clutched Last Bull maliciously around the base of his horns and tried to twist his neck. This enterprise, however, was too much even for the elephant's titanic powers, for Last Bull's greatest strength lay in the muscles of his ponderous and corded neck. Raving and bellowing, he plunged this way and that, striving in vain to wrench himself free from that incomprehensible, snake-like thing which had fastened upon him. Bong, trumpeting savagely, braced himself with widespread pillars of legs, and between them it seemed that the steel fence must go down under such cataclysmic shocks as it was suffering. But the noisy violence of the battle presently brought its own ending. An amused but angry squad of attendants came up and stopped it, and Bong, who seemed plainly the aggressor, was hustled off to his stall in deep disgrace.

Last Bull was humiliated. In this encounter things had happened which he could in no way comprehend; and though, beyond an aching in neck and shoulders, he felt none the worse physically, he had nevertheless a sense of having been worsted, of having been treated with ignominy, in spite of the fact that it was his foe, and not he, who had retired from the field. For several days he wore a subdued air and kept about meekly with his docile cows. Then his old, bitter moodiness reasserted itself, and he resumed his solitary broodings on the crest of the knoll.

When the winter storms came on, it had been Last Bull's custom to let himself be housed luxuriously at nightfall, with the rest of the herd, in the warm and ample buffalo-shed. But this winter he made such difficulty about going in that at last Payne decreed that he should have his own way and stay out. "It will do him no harm, and may cool his peppery blood!" had been the keeper's decision. So the door was left open, and Last Bull entered or refrained, according to his whim. It was noticed, however—and this struck a chord of answering sympathy in the plainsman's imaginative temperament—that, though on ordinary nights he might come in and stay with the herd under shelter, on nights of driving storm, if the tempest blew out of the west or north-west, Last Bull was sure to be out on the naked knoll to face it. When the fine sleet or stinging rain drove past him, filling his nostrils with their cold, drenching his matted mane, and lashing his narrowed eyes, what visions swept through his troubled, half comprehending brain no one may know. But Payne, with understanding born of sympathy and a common native soil, catching sight of his dark bulk under the dark of the low sky, was wont to declare that *he* knew. He would say that Last Bull's eyes discerned, black under the hurricane, but lit strangely

with the flash of keen horns and rolling eyes and frothed nostrils, the endless and innumerable droves of the buffalo, with the plains-wolf skulking on their flanks, passing, passing south into the final dark. In the roar of the wind, declared Payne, Last Bull, out there in the night, listened to the trampling of all those vanished droves. And though the other keepers insisted to each other, quite privately, that their chief talked a lot of nonsense about "that there mean-tempered old buffalo," they nevertheless came gradually to look upon Last Bull with a kind of awe, and to regard his surly whims as privileged.

It chanced that winter that men were driving a railway tunnel beneath a corner of the Park. The tunnel ran for a short distance under the front of Last Bull's range, and passed close by the picturesque cottage occupied by Payne and two of his assistants. At this point the level of the Park was low. and the shell of earth was thin above the tunnel roof.

There came a Sunday afternoon, after days of rain and penetrating January thaw, when sun and air combined to cheat the earth with an illusion of spring. The buds and the mould breathed of April, and gay crowds flocked to the Park, to make the most of winter's temporary repulse. Just when things were at their gayest, with children's voices clamouring everywhere like starlings, and Bong, the little elephant, swinging good-naturedly up the broad white track with all the load he had room for on his back, there came an ominous jar and rumble, like the first of an earthquake, which ran along the front of Last Bull's range.

With sure instinct, Bong turned tail and fled with his young charges away across the grassland. The crowds, hardly knowing what they fled from, with screams and cries and blanched faces followed the elephant's example. A moment later and, with a muffled crash, all along the front of the range the earth sank into the tunnel, carrying with it half-a-dozen panels of Last Bull's hated fence.

Almost in a moment the panic of the crowd subsided. Everyone realised just what had happened. Moreover, thanks to Bong's timely alarm, everyone had got out of the way in good season. All fear of earthquake being removed, the crowd flocked back eagerly to stare down into the wrecked tunnel, which formed now a sort of gaping, chaotic ditch, with sides at some points precipitous and at others brokenly sloping. The throng was noisy with excited interest and with relief at having escaped so cleanly. The break had run just beneath one corner of the keepers' cottage, tearing away a portion of the foundation and wrenching the structure slightly aside without overthrowing it. Payne, who had been in the midst of his Sunday toilet, came out upon his twisted porch, half undressed and with a shaving-brush covered with lather in his hand. He gave one look at the damage which had been wrought, then plunged indoors again to throw his clothes on, at the same time sounding the hurry call for the attendants in other quarters of the Park.

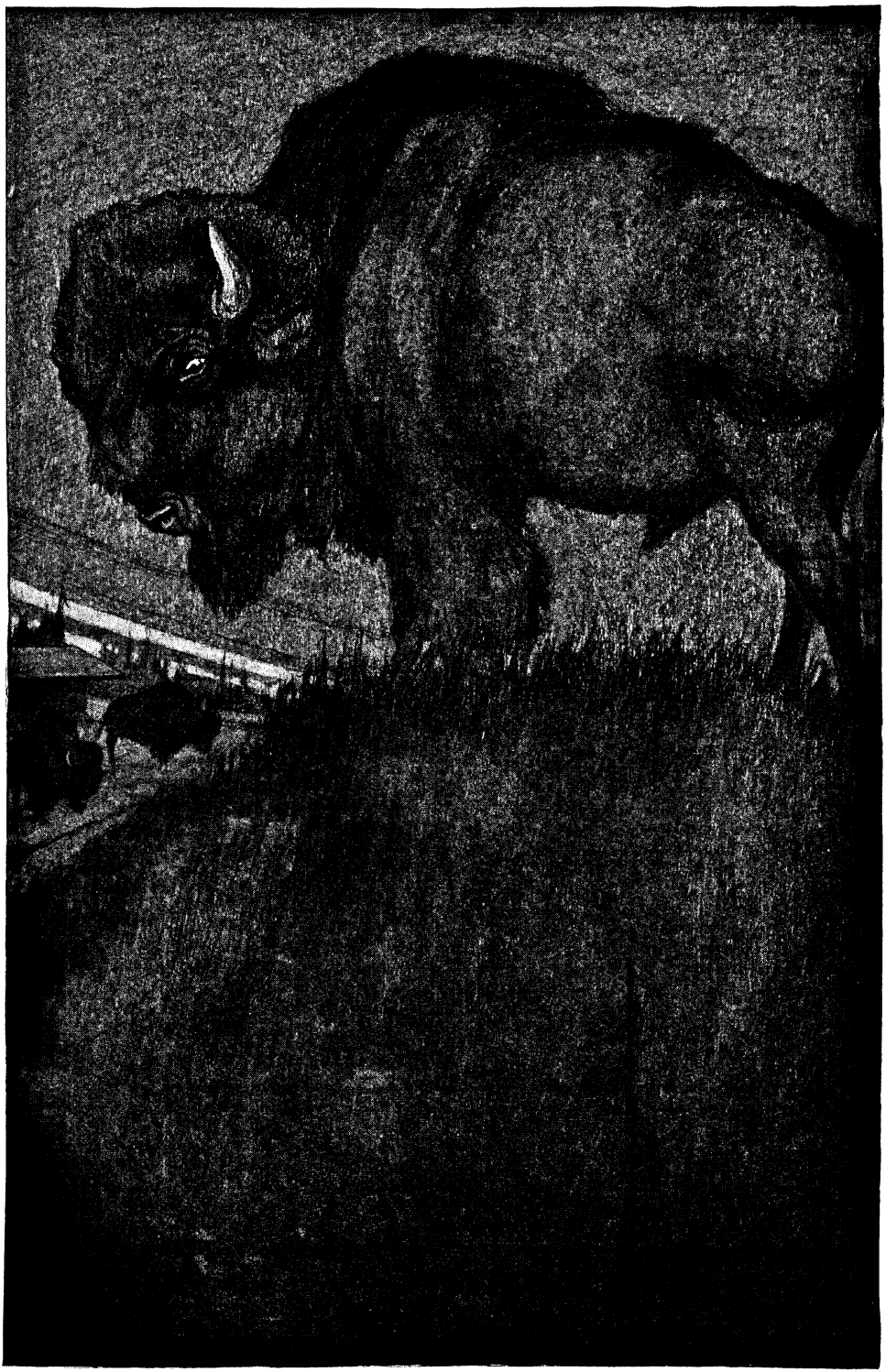
Last Bull, who had been standing on his knoll with his back to the throngs, had wheeled in astonishment at the heavy sound of the cave-in. For a few minutes he had stared sullenly, not grasping the situation. Then very slowly it dawned on him that his prison walls had fallen. Yes, surely, there at last lay his way to freedom, his path to the great open spaces for which he dumbly and vaguely hungered. With stately deliberation he marched down from his knoll to investigate.

But presently another idea came into his slow mind. He saw the clamorous crowds flocking back and ranging themselves along the edge of the chasm. These were his enemies. They were coming to baulk him. A terrible madness surged through all his veins. He bellowed savage warning and came thundering down the field, nose to ground, dark, mountainous, and irresistible.

The crowd yelled and shrank back: "He can't get across!" shouted some. But others cried: "He can! He's coming! Save yourselves!" And with shrieks they scattered wildly across the open, making for the kiosks, the pavilions, the trees, anything that seemed to promise hiding or shelter from that on-rushing doom.

At the edge of the chasm—at this point forming not an actual drop, but a broken slide—Last Bull hardly paused. He plunged down, rolled over in the *débris*, struggled to his feet again instantly, and went ploughing and snorting up the opposite steep. As his colossal front, matted with mud, loomed up over the brink, his little eyes rolling and flaming, and the froth flying from his red nostrils, he formed a very nightmare of horror to those fugitives who dared to look behind them.

Surmounting the brink, he paused. There were so many enemies, he knew not which to pursue first. But straight ahead, in the very



"He resumed his solitary broodings on the crest of the knoll."

middle of the open, and far from any shelter, he saw a huddled group of children and nurses fleeing impotently and aimlessly. Shrill cries came from the cluster, which danced with colours, scarlet, and yellow, and blue, and vivid pink. To the mad buffalo, these were the most conspicuous and the loudest of his foes, and therefore the most dangerous. With a bellow he flung his tail straight in the air, and charged after them.

An appalling hush fell, for a few heart-beats, all over the field. Then from different quarters appeared uniformed attendants, racing and shouting frantically to divert the bull's attention. From fleeing groups black-coated men leapt forth, armed only with their walking-sticks, and rushed desperately to defend the flock of children, who now, in the extremity of their terror, were tumbling as they ran. Some of the nurses were fleeing far in front, while others, with eyes starting from their heads, grabbed up their little charges and struggled on under the burden.

Already Last Bull was half-way across the space which divided him from his foes. The ground shook under his ponderous gallop. At this moment Payne reappeared on the broken porch.

One glance showed him that no one was near enough to intervene. With a face stern and sorrowful he lifted the deadly Winchester which he had brought out with him. The spot he covered was just behind Last Bull's mighty shoulder.

The smokeless powder spoke with a small, venomous report, unlike the black powder's noisy reverberations. Last Bull stumbled. But recovering himself instantly, he rushed on. He was hurt, and he felt it was those fleeing foes who had done it. A shade of perplexity darkened Payne's face. He fired again. This time his aim was true. The heavy expanding bullet tore straight through bone and muscle and heart, and Last Bull lurched forward upon his head, ploughing up the turf for yards. As his mad eyes softened and filmed he saw once more, perhaps—or so the heavy-hearted keeper who had slain him would have us believe—the shadowy plains unrolling under the wild sky, and the hosts of his vanished kindred drifting past into the dark.

TO MONDAY.

MONDAY, it was at school I learned to hate
Thy very name, and nothing can dispel
The recollection of thy baleful bell
Which called me back to my accustomed fate!
Through Scripture History my path was straight,
For somehow I could generally tell
The names of all the Kings of Israel
And could assign to each some sort of date.

But how shall I depict the dismal gloom
To which, thereafter, I became a prey,
When in another ink-bespattered room
With unenlightened lips I strove to say:—
"Bonjour, mon ami! Avez-vous la plume
Et l'encre aussi de mon jardinier?"

HANSARD WATT.

THE DIVIDED SOUL.

By G. B. LANCASTER.

POLSON'S CAMP was at lunch, with a heat-sick sky overhead and a racked, pallid earth underfoot, and the reason of its labours for the last eighteen months lying useless in the drying river-bed below. Billies and pannikins burned red-hot to the touch, and a damper was curled inside out, like dried leather, where Darrett had left it in the sun. Cortiss picked it up and sent it at Darrett's head with words to match. But Darrett lay on his elbows and stomach, and continued to curse the universe, uncaring.

Cortiss settled back under the three inches of shade flung by a manuka bush.

"This 'ere camp's dry-rotted," he said.

He spoke to no one in particular, and Kefford answered, his breath coming stertorously, his great, bull throat swelled with heat where the loose shirt fell away—

"This 'ere camp's a blank fool! That's what! Farren's is closed down, an' Montgomery's is closed down—an' there ain't goin' ter be no water ter carry the logs this side everlastin'. Why ain't we closed down, then?"

Din spat out a mouthful of tea-leaves and tossed the end of his damper to a weka that was tasting his bootlaces.

"That's easy! Guv us another! Don't we all know as Harry won't close down while there's ernuff of us lef' for him ter curse at? An' there won't be that long! I'm weared to a shadder—an' less. Pity as I hadn't the sense to go south six months ago. They gits wet wi' suthin' 'sides sweat down there."

Behind the big crane where the cicadas were shrieking, Gearing grappled with the sickness of heat-sunstroke.

"Pity I hadn't the sense never ter come up ter Mercury!" he groaned. "Pity I hadn't the sense never ter come ter New Zealand!"

"Oh, rats! Pity you hadn't the sense never ter git born!" Westall slung down his pannikin and turned from the quiver of heat over parched river and earth and sky. "You ain't the spunk of a wren, Gearing. That's what is the matter wi' you. Why don't yer up an' tell Harry yer goin' ter cut it? That's what I'm goin' ter do."

Cortiss knew New Zealand from her head to her feet, and he knew his fellows in like degree. He rolled out of a flax bush, with his moist, peaky face upturned.

"Hare yer, me auntylope wi' the shinin' 'ead?" he said. "Hand what's 'Arry goin' ter say, are yer thinkin'? There ain't much meat as 'e can't make inter 'ash when he 'as a mind to. Hand you won't need much seasonin', Westall."

Westall was not over nice in his habits, and the camp approved Cortiss with a generosity that brought Westall upright swiftly.

"You wait till I teach yer, Cortiss! You as I cud pick the stuffin' outer wi' me finger-nail."

"Try hit on ter Swale." Cortiss jerked Swale neatly into the foreground. "'E's about 'arf my size, hand near quarter my pluck. 'Sides, 'e's got a ache to-day, so you might 'ave a look in. Swale—Hi'll 'ave you out o' that. Ain't there heven the helements o' liver an' pluck left ter us?"

Tarson grinned, softly beating the yellow mud from his hands. Well he knew that the wrath of men was ever dearer to little Cortiss than the kiss of woman. But the love of a man's game, such as would hurry the blood in clogging veins and put pride to the lagging step, was dearer yet. And the drought had taken all such from Polson's Camp when it came to knock away the scaffolding of habit and to strip each man naked to the character which he had been building up inside the scaffolding.

"The Salvation Army's been converting Gresham's," he said irrelevantly. "And No. 2's dry-rotted, and all the rest are closed down. What is Mercury going to say of Polson's, eh?"

A sentence came clear-cut from the dusty scrub by the logging-track.

"If any chap wants to know what Polson's says o' Mercury—it's rotten!"

Mercury Bay lies very near the top of

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New Zealand, and the geography books do not generally say anything about it. But because every inhabited patch of God's earth must stand sponsor at the Last Day for the passions of the men it has bred, Mercury has a value of its own, and, without any doubt, there will be a mixed account for it to render.

Gearing pulled himself upright, smearing the dust from his flat, pallid face and blue eyes.

"Half twelve," he said. "Kefford, it's you an' I for startin'. D'you think it'll be any cooler in the loggin'-track?"

Kefford felt slowly in his coat-pockets, and his purple face took on a nasty look.

"I'm havin' my pipe first," he said.

Din dropped an armful of chains with a crash, and more than one man halted irresolute. For, by order of Harry Danvers, fire of any sort was a forbidden sin out here on the bush-land, where the young leaves withered with the heat, and the springs dried into white mud, and the green of fern and moss was blasted to dull ochre chips that crisped and slipped underfoot. But the devil of strike and discontent was over the camp, and each man hated and suspected his fellow-men and—himself.

Cortiss's face shot out from between the gleaming flanks of the bullocks he was coupling.

"'Ello, my hingenyous hydrangea!" he called. "Hi wish you luck when 'Arry gits the stink o' that 'bacca."

Kefford blew the wreaths high in the thin air, and Gearing's mouth watered.

"Jes' what I'm wantin' to set me up. Gosh, there's Harry!"

A swift foot crashed down through the dried manuka scrub behind Kefford; a sharp twist jerked the pipe from his teeth, snapped it in two, and dropped it. Then Harry Danvers put his foot on the pieces and said—

"Hand over your matches, Kefford, and get up to your team. And don't be a fool, unless you want something else first. Do you? Get out of that coat, then!"

He cast his own, standing up, all bone and taut sinews, in the quivering air, and the lines of his face made strange reading. There was sign of the brute there, of the leader, of the gay, reckless lover, of the man of silence and endurance, of the man who had fought temptation and fled from it and broken before it over and over again.

But Harry asked from no man pity or help, although he had stood before as now—one man against a camp and that camp riddled through with mutiny. He waited, with the shadeless sun on his half-smiling face and keen eyes, and the men waited also, breathless and eager to see blood spilt, so that it was not their own.

Then the slushy—he had come down to gather up plates and pannikins for the cook—giggled in a broken treble, and Kefford pitched his full weight forward with a curse. Harry swung aside as the great fist cut down through the air, laid Kefford on his back with a level left-hander, plucked the bullock-whip from the crook of a fuchsia tree, and tossed it over.

"Pick that up and get back to your work," he said. "Make a start there, Cortiss; you're blocking the way. Gearing, tell Thompson I'll be up at the head in two hours."

Gearing gasped as Kefford slouched across to his team, cowed and sullen.

"Tell him," he murmured, falling into line. "You bet I'll tell him—what'll put a kink inter them straight eyebrows o' his."

The last sled crawled off the logging-bank, and Tarson paused with his hand on the haulage chain.

"You won't do that too many times more," he said. "Every mother's son of 'em is ready to kick. Can't you feel it in the air, Harry?"

Harry lifted his shoulders a little, his lips yet curved with a smile.

"Kick," he said. "They'll kick every day and all day until they bust the whole show up. But I'll sweat the fight out of 'em while I can."

"We're stale," said Tarson, staring down the river-bed, where a half-score lumpers dawdled with bars among the logs—"stale as last Easter's buns. You haven't got a decent collar-pull out of us this two months—and you won't, I'm thinking. The drought's flayed us, body and soul. We're empty little nutshells, Harry, without kernel enough to rattle."

Harry nodded. Drought of another sort had flayed him years back with the marks that no after-time will heal.

"You'd best send Bob up to grease the chain-barrel before the next load comes along," he said. "She's squealing like a scared girl. And make the dump a couple of yards further out, Tarson. The sand is beginning to run."

He crossed to the back of the logging-bank, where a gang was patching the underway of clamped logs and trodden, dusty clay. The men fumbled their tools carelessly and

without heart, and Harry's eyes contracted, glancing over the stooped backs and the burnt necks.

"Hand me that adze a moment, Tommy," he said. "And get a bit of rag for that thumb of yours; it'll give you beans if you get the dirt into it. Martin, sling that cross-tie to the right. To the right, I tell you. Well, how are you going to wedge the stop in? Will you——"

It was ten minutes before he passed Tarson again. Tarson was overhauling the crane connections, with Bob dripping grease on him from the tops, and he was angry. He straightened, with his lips uncertain under the thin moustache, and thrust back his wet hair with a blackened hand.

"It's utter nonsense, Harry," he said. "Sling it up. You won't hold them till the rains come. You won't hold me. There aren't going to be any rains. There's going to be the end of the world, an' purgatory's begun already. I'm sick of this, I tell you—dead sick!"

Harry looked at the man curiously. The white of the baked dust was on him, and on the straddled legs of the crane, and on the piled logs and the clumps of gay manuka that dotted the naked faces of the hills. And, looking, he felt that it was also on his own soul.

"Sick of it," he said. "Bah! Aren't we all sick—of everything? Don't imagine that you're dancing to your own tune, man. The whole world is whistling it. But—there's just the question of who gives in first, you see. Charlie, hold on there, you——"

He leapt down through the crackling scrub to the parched clay of the river-bed, and Tarson grunted, tightening a nut in the revolving-gear.

"So Harry's full up, too," he said. "That puts the perpendicular roof on the entertainment. We'll all be out on strike to-morrow, and then the chips'll fly."

Harry knew this quite as certainly as Tarson did. It mattered rather more to him. And then, standing out in the merciless sun, with the stench of drying weed in the backwaters, and of heated men on the bank, and of brazen, flowering flax and kowhai along the scarred faces, he felt suddenly that it did not matter. Respect, honour, love—all that a man has were gone. Let power go with the rest. And — there remained yet three bottles of brandy under his bunk.

He crossed the logging-bank, kicked up the dust of the bush-track beyond, passed into the clearing—where great hinaus made a bank to block out the air, and the smell of burnt fat from the eating-whare half choked him—went into his tent, and dropped the flap behind. In the sudden darkness after the glare his seared brain saw yet the bare hills and wide river-bed gaunt and desolate under the sun. He fell on his bunk, pressing his eyeballs with his fingers.

"Well," he said, as though one listened, close bending, "what's to do now? I've held them—longer than another man could or would. And I've kept myself straight. And what's to come of it? They'll go out on strike, and I'll get the sack at head-quarters. Oh, I'm done—I'm done! There'll be a big row before I get them out of this. And I can't stop it. But I've worked with all the soul and body of me. Desirée!"

He lay still, and a fly-catcher, seeking a bee across the tent, brushed his cheek with a wing soft as a girl's lips. Then he moved with an oath, came to his knees, and groped in the stamped tussock of the floor for the bottles.

It is the devil in man which fits him to become a god in some future existence. This because only through sin overcome can a soul rise to godhood. The soul in Harry was divided, as is the soul of every man who has lived fully. By day and month and year it forced him to fight and to fall and to fight again. But it is not good for any man that there should be none to say "Well done!" at the fighting.

A yell split the still air of the clearing. It brought the cook from his fire, a dribbling saucepan in his hands and the round-eyed slushy gaping behind his shoulder. It brought Harry out, cool, close-lipped, alert. For on a North Island logging-camp the men wear their feelings—and little else—outside their skins, and Harry did not know what that yell might mean. Just who told him that there was fire in the hills he never remembered. It seemed that the whole earth shouted it at him with tongues of horror, and he stood a moment with the wild, heated faces pressing round him. Then that sixth sense which knows how and when to snatch at men's heart-strings woke in him, and he jumped for the implement-shed.

The men were after him, eager, swift-handed, as he slung out the tools to them. The smell of haste, of vivid excitement, was in the air, and Cortiss was trolling out a war-song as he tripped and ran with his double-armful of raw-hide beaters. All the dull,

blank, muggy hillside seemed suddenly tingling with delirious joy, and the men laughed as they had not laughed these three months, with the blood singing through their veins for fight, and the strong life quick in them. For the moment the dry-rot was forgotten.

Harry understood, and he swerved towards Cortiss as the two ran up the slope together.

"That's it," he said. "Wake 'em! Wake 'em up! We've got 'em going, Cortiss, but who's to keep them going when they find that it won't be all buns and milk up there?"

Cortiss broke his song to answer, and his little, sharp eyes held the adoration which few men give to their fellows.

"You," he said—"you, hon your pertickler own. 'Arry, you cud turn 'em hinside hout hif you'd hon'y b'lieve hit."

Up the steep faces the logging-tracks lay all ways through a muddle of young undergrowth and broken timber. Rails warped and left years back tripped the men; the unshaded sun scorched them where the tussock crests spread bare to it; rabbit-holes stretched them flat on the sand-ridges, and deep guts with a flash of toothed rock below daunted them. But a power which was not their own drove them forward to the hurrying lilt of Cortiss's song. Then Harry took it up, and the thread of triumph ringing through it drove Jamie Macintosh half wild.

Wi' a hundred pipers and a', and a',
Wi' a hundred pipers and a' . . .

They came into the bush, and it smothered and heated them, with its closed vines and its startled fluttering of unseen birds and its smells of all wet, sweet rottenness since earth began. Lawyer-thorns hooked them under ears and nostrils; great tree-ferns beat dried leaves against their mouths; maidenhair and long-rotted tree-boles came away in their hands as they swarmed out of the cool gullies to a barren hilltop with a finger of pale smoke crooked over the ranges behind it. One wind-blown taste of salt sea air was blasted before the harshness of burning wood, and Harry grunted as he dropped, hand by hand, down a rock ridge to the tramline.

"Will they stand up to it?" he said. "And if I have to smash one, will the rest work, or—will they smash me?"

Cortiss fell all-fours on the corduroy. His tongue was hanging out, and he took no notice of the breathless questions around him.

"Cortiss! Corty, you little skunk . . . d'you see it? How big is it? Where——"

Then they doubled the corner, and the universe gave answer.

Far off, very far off, the great distances of the ranges lay spread before them, spouting flame as whales spout water at play, crested with smoke, dun, black, and scarlet, running into wild-fire shapes that flung shadows on the naked sky and passed and came again. And very faintly, like the echo from another world, sounded a crying and a sobbing and a complaining borne on a dull, low under-roar of pain.

Two minutes of thought would have made the men hopeless. Harry did not give it. He glanced round, and his voice rang out to catch the last straggler panting under the pines.

"We'll save the kauri," he said, "and we're the only camp on the river could do it. There's dry-rot in the others. But we're all right, eh, boys? We'll do it—with the choppers. Sling those beaters down. If we put our backs into it, we won't need 'em."

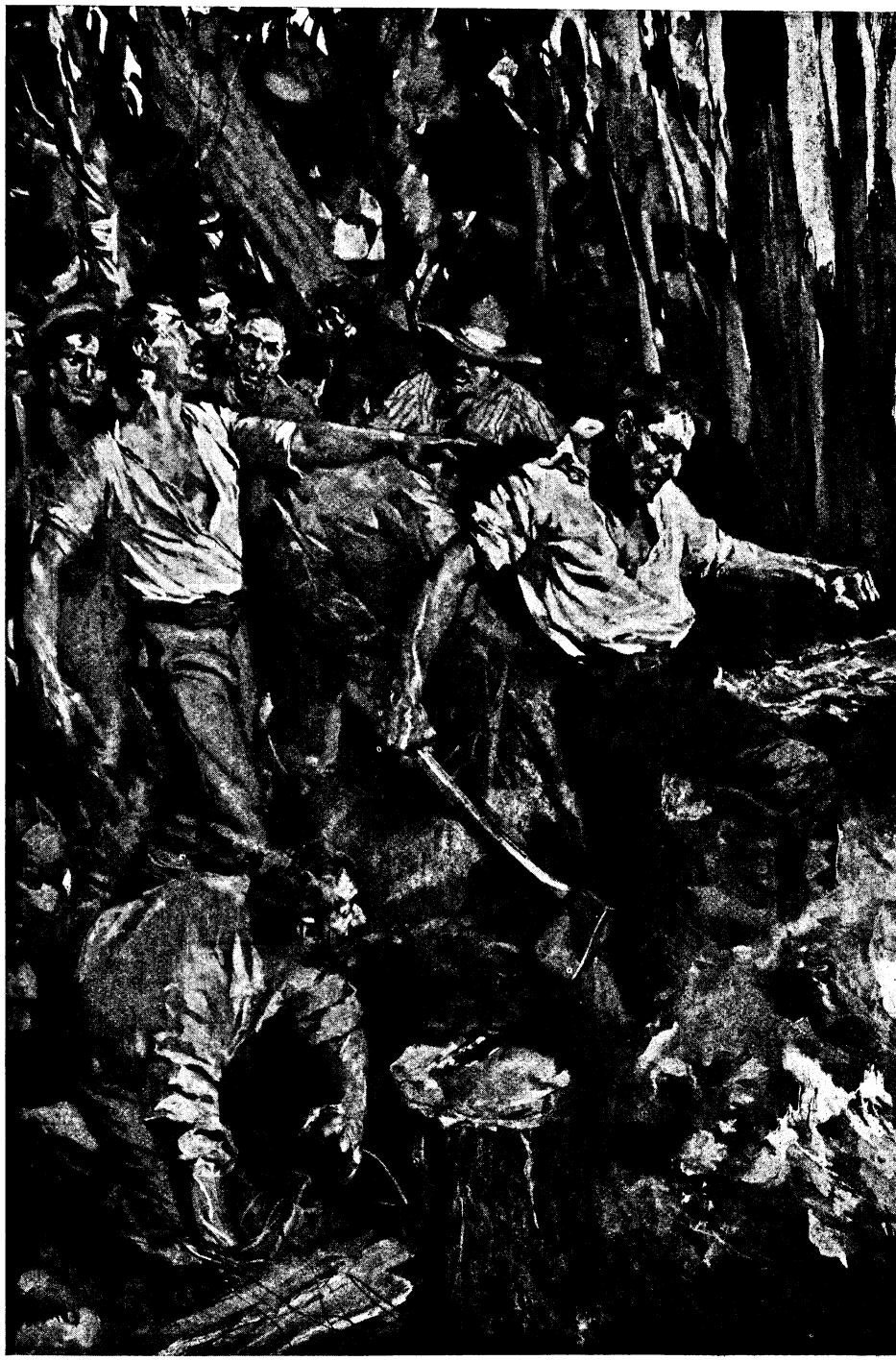
Tarson never knew how it was done. He asked Harry an hour later, stopping to shake the sweat off his hands. Harry grinned. He had just pushed forward the last of his outposts.

"They don't know, either . . . an' by night they won't want to. We may save the kauri spur, Tarson, but we're going to shake the dry-rot out of Polson's, anyway."

Harry was an engineer as well as a bushman and a drunkard. It is always necessary for a Colonial to be several things, although the last is not indispensable. He knew exactly what could be done at this present, and—what was more valuable—he knew how to make the men do it. Polson held the only bit of kauri timber along the river, and in hard cash it was worth many men's lives. It stood on a spur by itself, because the best timber will not mix with other, and a steep gully ran down either side the spur. They had begun the tapping of this kauri a week back, and here, at head of the logging-track, Harry found the bullocks yet in their chains, with Thompson only to guard six teams.

"Bring 'em along," he said curtly, and went upward to the neck of the spur.

The bush was thick on the neck—thick with tall, dark matais and hinaus, with quivering five-finger and shining broad-leaf and nikau palms of a thirty-foot leaf. Flowering supplejack bound them, and clematis spilling blossom and convolvulus



"'Get down to it, men,'"

knotted with the thousand-root kia-kia vine. Budded moss was close underfoot, with threadlike ferns and glowing berries, and far up, in a red-topped tree, a moko-moko swung and sang, uncaring.

Harry gave his orders, curt and very clear. Then he left the men to cut and lay the green swathe of trees whereon they would later take their fire baptism, and called up Thompson.

"You'll take a couple of bullocks down with a sled," he said, "and bring back tea and damper. Whips of tea, and strong. Take the slushy back with you; he'll cut off someone's head if you don't. And look sharp. We'll be at it all night, without shifts."

"Will they do it?" asked Thompson, remembering.

A queer light flashed in Harry's eyes for a second.

"Which of them has the pluck to be the first funker, do you think?" he said, and went back.

Because men in the bulk are more like a flock of sheep than the theorist will ever believe, each man will jump a straw on the ground if his leader jumps it. This fact has been responsible for the making and breaking of most empires. It was responsible for the following hours of stress, when the men worked, half naked and dripping, with hands that slipped and blistered on the axe-hafts and the saw-handles, and eyes that smarted and ran tears as the smoke began to drift softly through the bush, acrid, blinding, and drying to the throat.

The heat grew with the hours, and the spirit of unrest grew with it. No man could have explained why he laboured there, dumb, blind, and aching. No man could have explained why the fire had become to him a personal enemy, to be hated and trapped and slain before rest could take him again.

But Harry Danvers knew, and he fed that spirit of hurry and mad eagerness all along the line, with a slashing word of contempt for a shirker, and a swift hand for the man tried beyond his strength, and a coarse joke for little Atkinson, cold with fear in the close-pressing heat. And slowly the big trees pitched crashing from the axe-bite, and the undergrowth crumpled, and the straining bullocks dragged piled heaps of timber flat, so that the presently coming fire might not leap the widening swathe.

It was a wild hope, but there was a glory in it, and in the rush of haste that shook the soul, and in the steady work that testified to the manhood of Polson's Camp.

Far over the mountains the sky was black, smudged ink. It was thin corkscrews, pulling the heart out of the ranges in squirts of fire. Again it was soft, white fleeces that turned to brown rocks as the men looked. And the brown rocks rammed the sky, splitting it into yellow ribbons. Hundred-foot caverns glowed along the distances, gleaming with giant eyes until a breath of wind toppled them into nothingness. Spouting columns on the ridges swayed an instant, and surged down with a rocket-tail of sparks. The smell of burning fused all other smells, and scalded the palate with the taste of it, and the heat was parching, breath-stopping, terrible.

"Hand," said Cortiss feelingly, "hit's goin' ter do hus more good than three generations o' Sunday-school."

He dropped his axe between his knees, licking his blistered palms carefully, and blinked on the hurrying life about him. In a fuschia clump Kefford and his axe grunted like rooting pigs; right forward, where a streak of light cleft the bush, Harry's lean face showed in strong, deep lines, cheek to cheek with Gearing's white-lipped, anxious one. Beyond the bullocks Gray's lank head bobbed from a falling puriri that cut the air with a shriek, and on the left, where the big saw snarled, a dozen men were slashing, breast-high, through the tree-ferns.

"This fills the bill—hand settles it," said Cortiss thankfully, and he swung up his axe again.

All along the tops the fire was coming, in scarlet and orange and the royal purple of a king. It struck arrows of light to the heart of the sleeping gullies; it painted the wild sky to the dome and beyond it; it carried all Nature's sounds on its wings, from the scream of live trees tortured to the sob of berries that burst on the ground.

Day was gone, perhaps. The men neither knew nor cared. The glare of half a distant world in flame was enough to light them at their work. Slowly the green swathe fell and broadened; slowly the high tops bent and crumpled, giving less for the fire to leap and snatch at when it should come. Slowly the heat grew and the rolling smoke sifted round them, and Kefford swore himself sick because he smashed his axe chopping a rock-face in the darkness.

Slowly the green swathe widened, and yet the fire was far off. But the first threat came, blown on the wind that hot wings had

fanned. Just a wicked, red eye in the cut fern, but all men saw it, and they halted, as though at a given word. Then Gearing shrank back with blank terror in his eyes, dropped his winger, and fled down the track.

This was Harry's hour. He laughed, tripping Gearing on his face.

"There's always one rotter in a camp," he said. "Now we know him. Get down to it, men. We didn't sweat here since noon to be bested at the end."

Kefford jumped the fallen Gearing.

"Smeller!" he said, and trampled out the red eye with great, cowhide boots.

Forward, Cortiss was chuckling as he swung his axe.

"Glory to ye, 'Arry, me bhoy!" he murmured. "Hif this don't put your pride back hinto you, Hi'll leather you mesilf. They was ready for buck-jumpin' all right."

Slowly the green swathe widened, catching the promise of the fire in earnest of its fulfilment. It fell from the roaring wind in flakes as of snow, in fat, whirling lumps, in blazing branches that swam down, dropping plumb through the rack. Little Atkinson was yelping from a burn on the neck, and the swathe rippled into flame more than twice. And the smoke thickened, and the heat grew, and the roar of a furnace-blast was in their ears. For the fire was coming, coming—leaping across the range-tops and pouring into the gullies, and the hope of saving the kauri spur had dwindled and blown away like grey ash before the breath. Harry knew it, but the men did not, for they had forgotten a time when the heavens were not a scarlet, galloping horror that stung their eyes. They had forgotten a time when trees along the distant hills did not fall like skittles when the ball is driven through them. They had forgotten a time when little, red mouths did not lap at them—here, over there, underfoot, to come again, laughing, snapping, stretching wider beneath their very hands. They had forgotten a time when they did not chop and slash and saw, with the sweat dripping from them, and the flying blacks smearing their sight. They had forgotten that they were men, with bodies blistered and burnt, with pores sucked dry by the scorching heat, and brains reeling and helpless in the roar that filled the world. For all thought or hope or understanding was sunk in a great eternity of strife that had no beginning nor end.

They would live the cleaner their lives through for this justifying of their manhood, and Harry knew it. Therefore he kept them at it until the danger was over-near and the end had come.

The elements that a man is made of are bigger than his body—by some ten thousand times. But he is generally afraid to recognise this. It was because Harry recognised it that he won a battle that night on the kauri spur, and then lost another because he could not control the elements.

On the range-top before them the fire shook out its banners, and the blast of its breath was hell. Either side points of fire were stabbing up the gullies, spinning, rioting, dancing in whirligig knots and ribands of rainbow colouring. Harry looked at the swathe cut with such infinity of labour. It would be of the value of a woman's hair to stop that torrent of flame when it came. Harry knew, but there was a gladness on his face that had not been there these years past. For the men were under his hand now, the full forty of them. They had no brain but his, no will but his. He was a man among men—a ruler—and not any more a drunkard who had gone out on the back-pull of the tide, leaving the core of his life behind him.

Tommy, the little greaser, stumbled past him, weeping because the sun was an orange tor sheer overhead and Thompson had refused to play him for it.

"I want to put it in my pocket and go home to bed," he explained, "for I'm tired of playing skittles—very tired."

Tommy's clothes were principally a kilt, and his young body was burned and blackened. Harry tucked his billhook under his armpit and carried the boy into the logging-way.

"And the others are coming in a moment," he said. "We're all going home to bed now, Tommy."

Then he went back to find them, and his face wore the high look of a man who has fought with gods—and won.

The crackle of close musketry was in the air, and the boom of big guns along the battle-front; and the thousand voices of the nearing fire sounded like the voices of a cheering army. The men did not want to leave it. They were mad drunk with weariness and exaltation, and the fire was snarling very near before the last stumbled into the logging-track, sick, blind, and stupid, and not understanding at all that he had to thank the keen-faced, silent man in the forefront for a night's work that would be told throughout New Zealand—aye, and beyond it.

The logging-track was hot, dim, horrible as purgatory. The men crawled down it unspeaking, and even Cortiss's cracked lips refused to whistle. Then they came out to the naked sunset hills, seeing north and south a widening march of flame, and below, in the drought-whitened river-bed, the stirring of strange, little, brown streams that ran and linked in the sand as the men neared to them. For the rains had come in the hills behind the fire-belt, and the waters had come, and Polson's logs of the year past were saved.

"Thank the Lord!" said Tarson humbly; and then young Gearing laughed near him, rocking his burnt arms.

"Oh, yus! But 'ow are we goin' to get out? Fire down-stream, an' fire up . . . and water in the river! We're clipped! We're clipped, sure!"

Westall turned with a snarl, and his teeth showed hideously white in the blackened face.

"Harry, you devil——" he said.

But Harry swung him aside, unheeding, went down the track with bleeding, bare feet, crossed the clearing, and shut his tent-flaps behind him. And down in the river the logs began to groan and move, shouldering each other.

In the clearing, on the track, across the logging-bank, the men dropped, exhausted and uncaring. Death was on all sides, but without Harry to flay them into understanding, this did not trouble them. Tarson looked at Cortiss where he stood, swaying on his feet.

"If Harry gives out now," he said, "I'll kill him! By all things, I'll kill him! I'm going to tell him so."

Cortiss laughed vacantly.

"'Arry? Was you sayin' 'Arry'd give hout? Jes' you go hand tell 'im so, me salamander, hand see where 'e'll put ye for it!"

Tarson went into Harry's tent at the double. Then he halted, stammering—

"The—the game's not up yet, Harry," he said.

Harry sat on the bunk edge with the open mouth of a black bottle gaping beside his knee. His hands dropped, his seared face was dull and sunken. Through the burnt trousers and singlet his skin showed raw and blistered, and his eyes were empty of meaning. It was a body with the soul gone out of it, and the beast only left. Tarson shivered. Then he remembered that this man had been the big cog-wheel wherein all the others had fitted and run during the past



"Harry sat on the bunk edge with the open mouth of a black bottle gaping beside his knee."

stress and agony. He touched the bent shoulder with a vague reverence.

"Harry, wake up! We're all waiting for you, man."

Harry sheered from the hand with an oath.

"Curse you! Don't! I'm flayed alive. Can't you——"

"Can't you bloomin' well come hout o' that?" demanded Cortiss, bursting through the tent-flap. "'Arry, me hemperor, we're

waitin' for you, hand fightin' like brothers, hevery man of hus. Tell us if we'd better go raftin' down the river—— "

Behind him came the crash of logs riding out on the waking stream with spurts of white foam between. Behind him, too, came the glare of the fire. Harry swung his legs back in the bunk and lay flat.

"Go to blazes if you like!" he said. "I don't care. Leave me alone."

Cortiss's dirty, little, tired face changed.

"You!" he said, and his voice cut like whipcord. "You as got hus into this mess, hand made hus think as you'd some hof the spunk hof a man! Hand you'd chuck hus now, would you? Oh, would you?"

"Oh, let him rip!" Tarson turned on his heel and went out. "He stinks of brandy. Cortiss, come on—— "

But such love and pride as Cortiss had for Harry Danvers do not break at the first test. He laid his hands on Harry tenderly.

"You're done," he said, "hand well you may be. But we wants you, 'Arry. Come hout, man. We ain't blamin' you for what's 'appened. I tell you there ain't a bloomin' kick lef' in the bloomin' lot on hus. We'll follow you blind . . . . hand mos' pertickler blind, too, some of hus. But we mus' 'ave you to follow."

"Oh, go to blazes! D'you think I funk any of you?" Harry's laugh was not good to hear, but the cold deliberation of his words was worse. "I'm not coming, Cortiss. There's no danger from the logs. You don't want me, and . . . I don't want myself. So I'm not coming. I'm going to stay here—with the fire."

Cortiss swung up the black bottle by the neck and broke it against the bunk-side.

"It's that drink talkin'," he said in his throat, "not you, 'Arry——"

Harry drew in his lips over his teeth. The fumes of the brandy were loosing his tongue as he had never loosed it to a man before.

"I am not coming, Cortiss. Why should I? If I go down river, I'll soak in the first pub I come across until they kick me out. And then I'll go on to the next. That's me. You didn't know it, did you? I've kept straight—I've kept straight!—but it couldn't last. I knew. It has never lasted before. If the fire had killed me, or purged the beast out of me—— But it hasn't, and there's nothing left. So I'm going to burn here. It may ease things for me a bit in the next world. I don't know. Physical pain doesn't count for much, anyway. Now, clear out, Cortiss. They're calling you."

Cortiss rubbed his black hand across his bleared eyes. Suddenly the lashes felt like post-and-rail fences.

"Not wi' that cursed drink," he said. "'Ave you got more hof it? For Hi'll not leave you hif you 'ave, 'Arry."

Harry looked at him strangely. Then he laughed, stooped under the bunk, and tossed two bottles at Cortiss.

"Here," he said. "Now—cut before I want them back. Go, will you?"

Cortiss scudded across the clearing with the intention of casting both bottles in the river and coming back to the man whom he loved. He was half blind and half deaf, and much more than half stupid, and a great grief was tugging at his heart. And the blasting heat and the great, red light, and the shouting of the men as they dropped away down-stream on the jarring logs, were as nothing beside the awful, glorious truth that one soul was going to use this agony of a world to purge itself clean in.

At foot of the logging-bank Cortiss flung the bottles into the whirling, brown water and turned back, more by instinct than sense. But a hand from a raft reached out, snatched at him, and swung him aboard as his wits left him, and he huddled sobbing at the man's knees.

And in his bunk Harry lay still, with shut eyes and his forehead pressed down on a pictured face that was too sacred for the touch of his lips.

"It was no use, love," he whispered—"no use. I couldn't fight any more . . . not even for you, Desirée."

A MISPLACED ALLEGIANCE.

By AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.

"  OME winter, come summer, I have loved you, Ellen, for nigh on fifteen year," Jabez said hoarsely. "An' now you ain't goin' to have me?"

"No," said Ellen, "I ain't."

Jabez lifted the worn cap that lay upon the counter, then he laid it down. His hands trembled a little.

"Is it 'cause o' *him*?" he asked.

"Yes," said Ellen in her clear sweet voice, "it be 'cause o' him. I ain't goin' to love none else."

"Then it ain't no good me waitin'? It ain't been no good me waitin' all them years?"

Ellen looked at the knitting in her hands, a delicate colour suffused her cheek. "No, it ain't no good," she replied.

A child ran past the shop window, swinging a skipping-rope and laughing. Its laugh ran along the road like a slight silver thread of sound. It fluttered and fell to the ground. Both man and woman listened to it till the last vibration died. The man's face darkened; it seemed to him that he heard the passing of those children of whom he had dreamt, his children and Ellen's. Were they but dream-children, and was the dream past? Had his waiting been but foolishness?

Ellen looked away from his face; she was touched by regret, yet stirred sweetly by a sense of sacrifice, by consciousness of constancy. Jabez was a good man, and faithful; but even he could not ruffle the waters of that great pool of remembrance, could not shake her in her determination to be true to the one man—the man she had always loved, and who had thrown her over with impunity for another, and lesser, woman's sake, nearly fifteen years ago.

All Malton Dip knew of the faithfulness of Ellen Garratt.

The silence was broken sharply. Jabez looked into the face with its luminous light of gentle pride, tender regret. "When I goes this time, I don't come back," he said.

"*Don't*, Jabez," said Ellen. She leant across the counter. "Don't you be thinkin' on me bitterly. I ain't wantin' to hurt you"—tears came into her eyes—"I ain't wantin' to be no enemy o' yourn. Can't we be friends quiet-like, still? Loving ain't all bitterness 'cause it stops outside th' church door. Ain't I loved *him*, him as wronged me, for nigh fifteen year? There ain't been no bitterness in th' love, not after them first few months."

"It ain't love, that ain't," said Jabez sharply.

Ellen drew back as if he had struck her. Her cheek reddened, her eye fired. "An' what be it, if it ain't love?" she asked. The sweetness of her voice held a passionate note. She was like a gentle bird whose nest is threatened.

"I ain't knowin' what it be," said Jabez heavily. "I ain't got no head for understanding wimmin in them ways. But it ain't love—that there as you be talkin' on; it ain't love."

"I ain't ever loved none other nor him," said Ellen tremblingly.

"Maybe, maybe," said the man. "I ain't sayin' naught again' you, Ellen. Ain't you the woman as I have loved all my life, boy an' man? Happen it be your way o' lovin', —that way as you speaks on—without bitterness. Then I wishes you good-bye, Ellen Garratt. Sence it be as you loves him now an' ever, things be over for me. Happen you ain't heard on it yet, but last night Jem Berry comed home to Malton Dip."

Ellen paled, the colour ebbed from her cheek, one tint after another, like a pink rose-leaf. Her grasp on her knitting grew tight, her hands stiffened on the needles. She said nothing.

Jabez turned away. "I wishes you all happiness, Ellen Garratt," he said. "Jem's wife be long dead, and he be keen to wed you, village says. I ain't grudgin' you aught as be your due, Ellen. Happen if 'twere a better man nor Jem as had comed back to you, I might forgive him for keepin' you—an' me—waitin' fifteen year."

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He went away. Ellen heard the shop door swing behind him with a soft whirr, and quietly close. She had not been able to say a word.

She sat down in her chair and, holding the wool tightly round her fingers, began to knit. She had loved Jem for fifteen years and more, and he had come home. She told herself how glad she was. After fifteen years' faithfulness, after a love which had been a byword in the village for its depth and generosity, she was to wed him—the lover of her youth. Jem was come back repentant, he wished to wed her. The days of waiting were over.

She had always thought of them as going on, and on, till the gentle sanctity of old age hallowed, and death's quiet finger ended them. She had reflected many a time upon her old age, had seen herself growing grey-haired and feeble, wrapt around still with a tender virginity, and faithful to Jem. She had dreamt of dreams to come, when she would sit dozing by the fire in her pretty room, seeing Jem beside her, a dream-figure of delightful youth. She would love Jem always, none else.

And when Jabez came in in the evenings to smoke and talk with her, their talk would be, as it had almost always been, of Jem.

These dreams were broken.

They were broken gloriously, for Jem had come home repentant. She was to marry her lover, there would be no need to dream of him.

And Malton Dip would have no need to reflect on her faithfulness when she was married to Jem. Women were supposed to be faithful to their husbands.

With a passionate gesture Ellen thrust her knitting aside. She rose. It was nearly tea-time, and she always retired into her little parlour while she had tea.

Perhaps Jem would come now. Suddenly colour leapt to her face. Without pausing to reflect or reason, she ran round the counter to the door. Her hand was on the lock when the door swung back. Ellen gasped a little. She pushed at the door.

"Miss Garratt," said a voice.

It was a woman's. Ellen, falling back, let the door swing open. She moved, a little unsteadily, far into the shadow of the shop. She went to her place behind the counter, stooped to find her knitting, which had slid to the floor.

"It be nigh to tea-time, so I hurried round. 'Tis a thread or two o' black linen as I want. There ain't a needleful in the house, an' naught else ain't strong enough to do mendin' for them boys."

The new-comer scanned Ellen's face closely. She was a broad-faced woman, with small, hard eyes and a chin of some strength. "You ain't lookin' well, Ellen," she said.

Ellen turned away to scan the shelves. She set her hand upon a long, narrow box and drew it out. "I be well enough," she said not ungraciously.

"You has had a shock, maylike?" said the other woman. Her tone held an unexpected gentleness.

Ellen winced. "Yes," she said.

The customer said no more, but her eyes were upon Ellen's face till the door closed behind her.

Ellen caught her hands tightly. She locked the door, then she stood again, clasping and unclasping her hands.

"'Twere that as she comed for—jest to see how I looked," she said aloud with a quick nervousness. "They'll be comin', most of 'em, to look at me. It ain't fair. It ain't in nowise fair."

After a moment's hesitation she drew the blind down over the door. That meant that, for the day, the shop was closed.

"No one won't come now," said Ellen to the silence. As she stood there, staring before her, and clasping and unclasping her hands, a man's footstep sounded in the silent street.

Involuntarily Ellen put out her hand. She set it against the door. Her breath came quickly and uncertainly, her breast heaved under her thin gown.

The man passed, and with an odd shame in her eyes Ellen moved away. She lifted her work from the counter and went into the little room behind the shop.

When half an hour was passed, the teapot was empty, but Ellen had eaten nothing. She was conscious only of thirst, yet she had let her tea stand each time till it was cold.

Contrary to her usual custom, she set the dishes aside to be washed up later on. Then she went to the back of the house and looked out.

Her garden was deserted, as were those of her neighbours. There was scarcely a sound upon the air. This was tea-time throughout the village. The children were in from school, and in every cottage the mother was busy filling hungry mouths.

The cold, sweet spring air blew upon Ellen's face, ruffling the fair hair into which neither time nor grief had been able to bring a grey thread. She had been right in

what she said to Jabez—there had been no bitterness in her waiting, in her love.

But he had said it was not love.

The remembrance of his words ran through her gentle mind, agitated now by strange currents which she did not recognise nor understand. These words no longer made her angry. Rather they filled her with surprise, almost dismay.

There was no one in any of the gardens: Ellen poked out her head and peered. She found a shawl and gathered it about her head. Then she slipped out.

She was like a grey shadow fading down the garden path between the hedges. At the top of the garden, beyond the fowl-house, was a tiny gate leading into the fields, and from them to the road. Ellen pushed it stealthily open and slipped through.

The wind blew upon her half-hidden face, and shook her skirts as she climbed the winding road beyond the fields. It was deserted, but she did not follow it far. Halfway up the incline she struck aside. She climbed a stile and, walking across the grass, gained the edge of the slope.

Then she sat down.

Her thoughts held her in a passionate embrace. She had no choice, she had to give herself up to them. For long years she had not been swayed by emotions as strong as those which held her now.

Her eye might wander as it would: no boundary confined its survey. Before her stretched wide fields, green slopes, a vast sweep of sky. The air blew about her in those sudden sweet gusts that give to the daffodil his homely freshness, and reach through him to the purity nestling in all hearts beneath their stains. Spring called with insistence: her voice was full of life, of wondering, of waking hope. It was a throbbing voice. It woke some pulse in Ellen which had slumbered for years. The waking was pain.

For that pulse bounded in sympathy with pure, strong things, vigorous life, growth of nature and of soul, the world's progress towards the highest, towards fulfilment.

Suddenly Ellen dropped her head upon her arms and broke into a passion of tears.

They broke from her in a strong, full flood that would not be controlled. They brought great relief to her. While the winds blew and pale shadows began to rise between the slopes, Ellen sat and wept.

When the storm was over she rose. She dried her eyes quietly and cast a long glance upon the waiting fields. Then she turned to go.

But a man was coming across the grass towards her; his unsteady, shambling figure caught her eye. Not recognising, not knowing, yet half expectant, she stood still and awaited him.

His pace was a slow one, and he did not quicken it. The mean form, with its head shifting from side to side, drew almost imperceptibly nearer. After what seemed to the waiting woman an eternity, she could descry sunken features, a twitching mouth, hanging arms.

Then he was upon her. She moved a step incredulously.

"Jem!" she cried.

There was anguish in the cry, but the man turned upon her a glance careless, mean, full of a shallow cupidity. Almost it might be said that he leered at her.

"Ah, it be you, Ellen! I thought it were," he said.

He came close to her, and she moved from him. "It be true!" she faltered.

"That I be home again? Aye, it be true."

He looked boldly into her face. "You didn't expec' no sech good luck, did you, my gel?"

She shivered.

"I thought as you might be none so ill-pleased to see me again," said the man, smiling; "but I never expected you to be as glad as you be."

The wind blew his breath towards her; it suggested the ale-house. Ellen grew white.

"Aye, lass, you has fallen on your feet," he ejaculated. He put out a hand and touched hers. "It ain't every gel as weds a man she has been waitin' on for fifteen year."

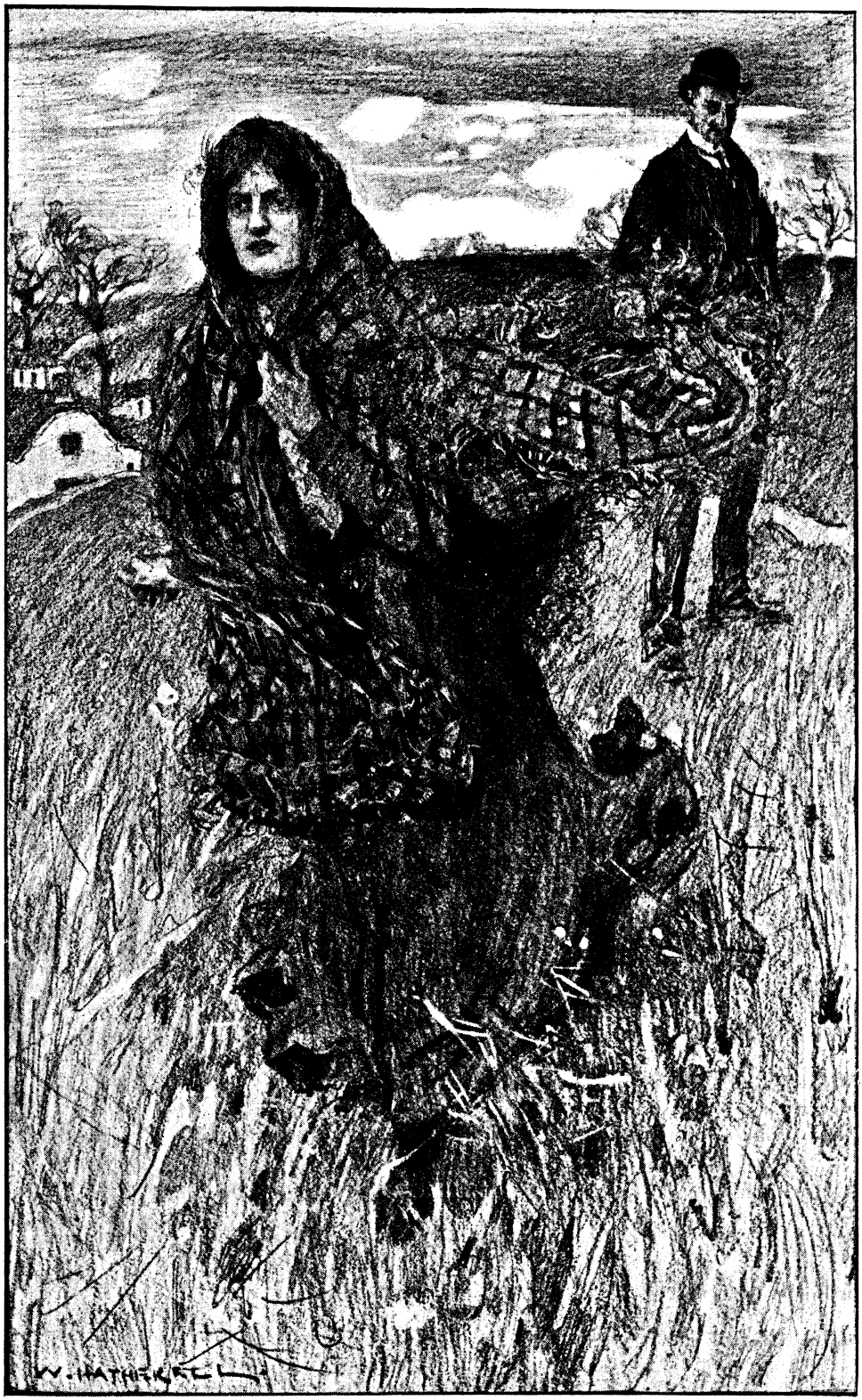
Ellen opened her mouth to speak, then she shut it. She drew away her hand.

"Nay, there ain't no need to be shy. I be waitin' to hear how glad you be to see me."

Ellen sprang back a few steps. She spoke suddenly, boldly, almost as if she spoke to some unseen presence, and not to the man before her, as if she vindicated herself. "I ain't glad," she said.

He looked at her in amazement. Even to his dulled senses the words carried more than the flippant denial of the coquette.

"Come, come, you ain't thinkin' what you be saying," he said roughly. He considered. "Happen I ain't said as I be come home to



"Suddenly she turned from him and ran."

wed you, but it be the blessed truth, that it be. An' I ain't no beggar, neither, Ellen. 'Tain't a poor man as be come beggin' succour. It be Jem, Jem come back rich an' prosperous; Jem as has more wits nor any two men in Malton Dip."

Jem was come home repentant! The thought flashed through her mind. The irony of it went through her heart. There was naught of repentance in the aspect of the braggart before her. His bleared eyes were upon her. She could see in them nothing to remind her of the image she had carried in her heart. She could see nothing of the lover she remembered. Was *this* Jem?

"Come," he said sulkily, "this be playin' it low down. I ain't goin' to sing small an' beg favours. Ain't I come back willin' to wed you, what be no longer in first youth, an' that when I be more nor fairly prosperous? Be you seekin' for me to kiss you, Ellen, I be in no wise willin' if you ain't got no sweeter look nor that there to turn on me."

Ellen clasped her hands.

"I ain't wantin' to wed you," she said. A hundred thoughts struggled in her mind, horror rose in her breast; but she could find words for no more than the simple denial.

When it was uttered, she sighed. A great relief was upon her. She looked from this wastrel, this soiled rag of humanity, towards the hills. He did not need her, he did not want her; he was offering her his favours and she need not accept.

Suddenly she turned from him and ran. She went through the grass blindly. Her skirts tripping round her legs, the tears streaming down her face, her bosom heaving with every panting breath she drew, she ran on.

As she flew down the road, she passed Jabez. He had been waiting, watching for her; but she did not take that fact in. His face was full of tenderness and angry pride. He would have turned away, but he caught sight of her tears.

He just touched her as she passed.

"Ellen!" he said.

Something leapt in his breast, something wild, tumultuous. Was Fate minded to give him what she had wrested away?

"Ellen!" he said again.

"I ain't goin' to wed wi' him," said Ellen. She ran on.

Jabez turned towards the hills with blinded eyes. He did not look after the flying figure, he did not follow. This was not the time to follow, to question, or harass.

In the doubt and distress of her face, in the signs of disillusionment and pain, he read what gave him courage for that further waiting required of him.

With her idol fallen, the shrine empty, the future she had dreamt of shattered, Ellen would turn to the love that would renew her. The flower would seek new fragrance in the sun.

THE MARCH.

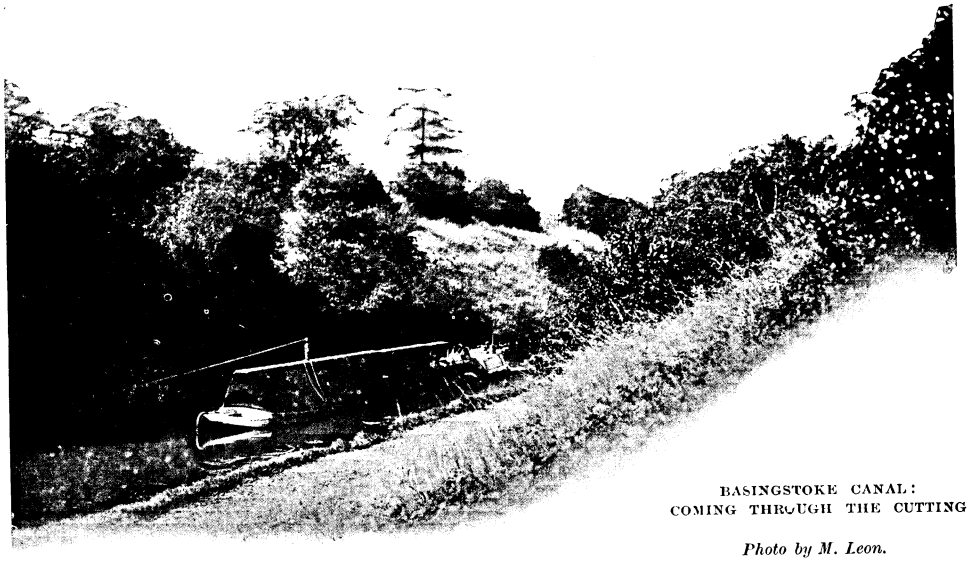
Roundel.

THE march goes on from morn till eve,
'Mid malison and benison:
While some rejoice and many grieve
The march goes on.

For every man down sinks the sun,
And none a lost day may retrieve;
But some find peace with victory won.

Well is it if we may relieve
Some heartache ere our day be done!
For though we fail—though we achieve,
The march goes on.

C. M. PAINE.



BASINGSTOKE CANAL:
COMING THROUGH THE CUTTING.

Photo by M. Leon.

THE INLAND NAVIGATION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY WILLIAM RALPH BALDWIN-WISEMAN.

III.—TRAFFIC AND TRACTION.

THE traffic on the canals is carried on in a variety of vessels, which differ considerably in dimension, outline, and cargo capacity, being, in general, designed to ply upon a particular waterway, with a particular class of cargo. Taking the canal mileage of the country as a whole, 35 per cent. of this will accommodate boats carrying from 18 to 30 tons of cargo, 58 per cent. will accommodate boats carrying from 40 to 60 tons, whilst only 7 per cent. will accommodate boats of greater capacity.

The boats are variously described as wherries, keels, flats, barges, wide and narrow boats, whilst other names are applied to distinguish boats having cabins and sleeping accommodation from those not so provided, and those in tow of other boats from those independently propelled. On the Norfolk rivers and broads most of the traffic is carried in wherries, which are of Dutch origin and carry a high foremast supporting a large brown sail, which, rising above the almost limitless expanse of green plain through which the stream wanders, adds a pleasant, though somewhat weird, feature to the landscape. One of the largest of these boats is 65 feet long and 19 feet wide and carries 83 tons, when fully loaded, on a draught of about 7 feet; but the more ordinary kind is about 56 feet long and 14 feet wide, and carries a load of about 23 tons, when fully loaded, on a draught of about 4 feet. In times of little or no wind, the vessel is quanted, the master or his man pressing with his shoulder applied to the butt-end of a stout pole or quant against the bed of the stream, whilst he walks along the plankway of the wherry, in the opposite direction to that in which it is moving. Amongst other sailing-vessels are the sailing-barges of the rivers Thames and Medway, which carry from 60 to 140 tons, and Yorkshire keels, which navigate the waters converging in the river Humber. These keels are about 57 feet 9 inches long, by 14 feet 6 inches beam, and carry a load of 100 tons on a draught of about 6 feet 9 inches. Severn trows, 70 feet long by 17 feet beam, carry a load of about 100 tons on a draught of 8 feet 6 inches.

Of non-sailing boats, the most common type is the narrow boat, which carries about 25 tons on a draught of about 3 feet 6 inches, its length being about 70 feet and its width 7 feet. On a few canals, such as the Huddersfield canal, where the locks are somewhat short, the length of the boats is only about 58 feet, whilst on some of the more narrow

canals around Birmingham, the boat, whilst of normal length, has a beam of only 6 feet 2 inches and draws only about 2 feet 9 inches. On some other canals wide boats are used, and these, whilst having about the same length as the larger narrow boats, have a beam of 11 feet. On the Leeds and Liverpool Canal a short but wide type of boat plies. This is 62 feet long, 14 feet 3 inches beam, and carries about 45 tons on a 3 feet 9 inches draught (see Table I.). On the Bridgewater, Rochdale, and other canals still larger boats or barges are used, the dimensions of which vary, on the different navigations, from 105 feet to 72 feet in length, from 17 feet 9 inches to 14 feet in width of beam, and from 4 feet 9 inches to 4 feet draught. Vessels called flats, but having the dimensions of barges, ply upon the Mersey and the Weaver Navigations. The former are 70 feet long by 14 feet 6 inches beams, and carry about 80 tons on a draught of about 5 feet, whilst the latter are 90 feet long and 21 feet beam, and carry 250 tons on a draught of 10 feet 6 inches. Upon the Aire and Calder Navigation a very considerable traffic is carried on between the collieries and Goole, the coal being carried in a specially designed boat-train, made up of from twenty to thirty steel compartments, each holding about forty tons of coal, linked together, fitted with a dummy bow, and towed by a specially designed tug. Upon arrival at the destination each compartment is separately lifted from the water and its contents emptied down a chute into a vessel's hold, which is thus loaded at the rate of about 200 tons an hour, a rather slow rate when compared with the rate of loading from railway-tips. At Cardiff the ss. *Askehall* was loaded with 6,715 tons of coal in eleven hours, or a little over 610 tons an hour; at Newport, Mon., coal can be loaded at the rate of 439 tons an hour from the fixed hoist on the South Dock, at the rate of 525 tons an hour from the movable hoist on the west side of the North Dock, and at a still greater rate from the new hoists on the South Dock extension. The very considerable variation in the dimensions of boats and locks has done much to militate against a steady development of canal traffic, for any considerable length of waterway has some section which has a minimum width or depth of waterway, or length of lock, or some sharp curve of short radius, which determines the maximum dimension of the vessels conveying the through traffic.

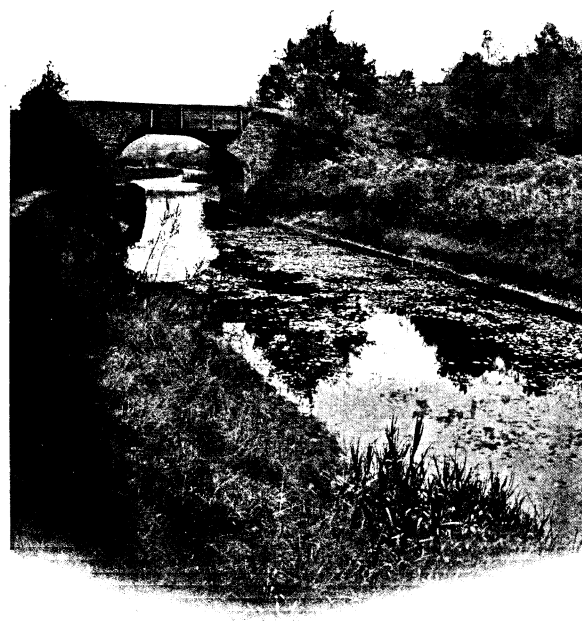
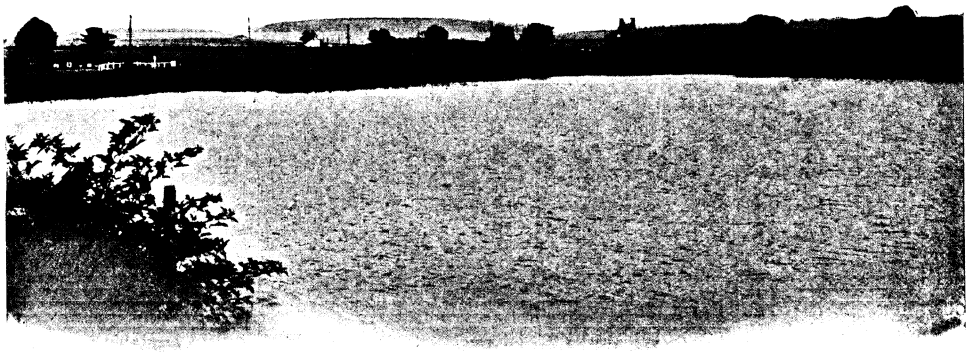


Photo by] [*M. Léon.*

HERMITAGE BRIDGE, NEAR WOKING, ON THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL.

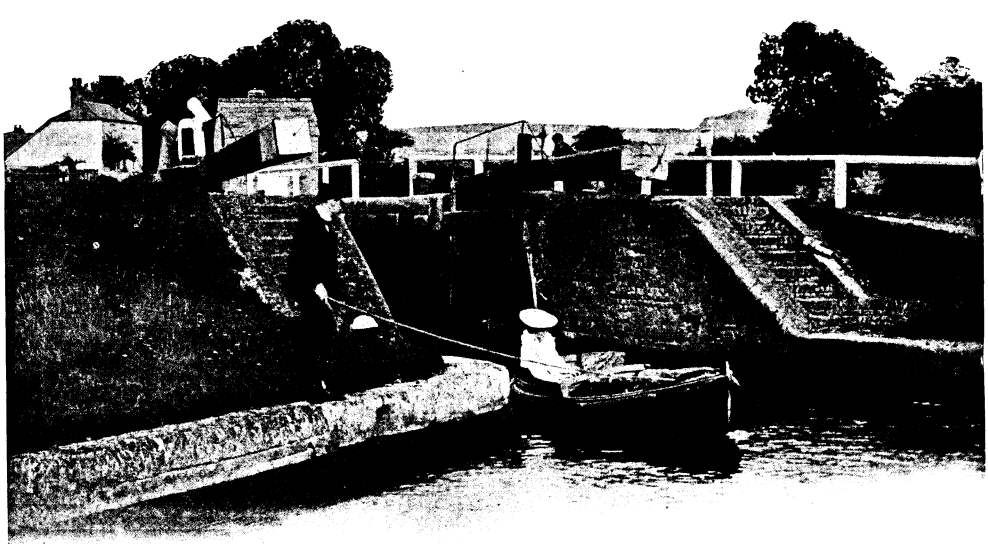
Thus it not infrequently happens, where the depth of the waterway varies on two sections of a through route, that a boat which would carry from 70 to 100 tons on the deeper draught in the first section, could not carry more than half that amount on the shallower draught of the second; or, in the case where the width of the waterway varies, the cargo must of necessity be transferred to vessels of less width of beam, at the junction of the two connecting reaches. Similar difficulties occur where the lengths of the lock chambers vary on two connecting canals, and further, but few of the boats capable of traversing a long series of inland waterways can safely navigate the estuarial waters, in which the canals terminate. Thus on a passage from the river Severn to the river Mersey, for instance, even presuming an uniform gauge, or at least no occasion for transhipment on the inland waterways, it would be necessary to tranship at least twice, once in the Severn and once in the Mersey.

As an example of the dissimilarity of gauge,



ONE OF THE RESERVOIRS ON THE GRAND JUNCTION CANAL.

take the case of the waterways connecting Ashton-under-Lyne, in Lancashire, with the port of Goole. Whilst a vessel 120 feet long, 17 feet 6 inches wide, and drawing 7 feet 6 inches of water, could navigate the thirty-two miles of the Aire and Calder Navigation, it could not pass beyond that waterway, and a vessel only 57 feet 6 inches long by 14 feet beam and drawing only 5 feet of water would be the largest which could pass over the thirteen miles of the next section—the Calder and Hebble Navigation. This vessel could also pass over the further four miles of the Huddersfield Broad Canal, but its load would have to be reduced, so that its draught did not exceed 4 feet 6 inches; but further than that it could not proceed, and its cargo would then have to be transferred to boats with the maximum dimensions of 70 feet long, 7 feet width of beam, and 3 feet 6 inches draught, in order to proceed over the remaining twenty miles of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, to its destination at the termination of that waterway. Some of the advocates of canal resuscitation urge the adoption of an uniform gauge on the main routes, capable of accommodating a boat of 250 tons burden, which is still somewhat small when compared with the 600-ton boats plying on some of the Continental canals. As a matter of course, no one would for a moment question that, within certain limits and for through traffic, the cost of transit is relatively more inexpensive for a larger than for a smaller boat.



Two photographs] [*by Clarke & Hyde.*

ON THE GRAND JUNCTION: LEAVING A LOCK IN A MOTOR-BOAT.

Nevertheless, as the tendency of present-day trade is for small consignments, it is extremely questionable if so large a boat as a 250-tonner could be at all economically operated on English waterways. For such a boat would waste much time on passage in loading or unloading, and as the bulk of present-day canal traffic is a short-distance traffic, this is not improbable; or if it was engaged in long-distance traffic, it would have to run with but a small fraction of its cargo space occupied and perhaps return empty, in addition to which, the cost of enlarging the route to accommodate boats of such tonnage would be almost prohibitive and hardly financially sound, so far as the present prospects are concerned. Moreover, the operation of larger locks on the widened sections would necessitate the installation of reservoirs of considerably increased capacity, and if, as has been proposed, locks 230 feet by 23 feet by 8 feet, capable of accommodating two vessels 110 feet by 21 feet 6 inches by 6 feet 6 inches, were constructed, the case would only be the more aggravated, for the cost of providing water storage would be still greater. It is also very questionable if the traffic would be attracted to the improved waterways in any quantity as the railways would keenly compete for the better class traffic and can offer a more expeditious service than can the canals. The writer has in mind several works, favourably situated on navigable rivers, with a good draught of water and unencumbered by locks, the owners of which could despatch their goods by water, yet prefer instead of this, to send off daily several truck-loads of rail-borne traffic. In seeming confirmation of this view, some of the more moderate supporters of canal resuscitation advocate an uniform gauge, not for a 250-ton boat, but only for a 60-ton boat.

Another point of considerable interest is the method of traction. The oldest method, and one which was in its early years safeguarded from the competition of other methods of traction by Acts of Parliament, was that of bowhauling, still practised on some few navigations, one or more men pulling on a rope, attached to a post fixed on the barge. At a later date horses supplied the traction, one horse being able to tow a 40-ton barge for about 25 miles at an average speed of about 2½ miles per hour. For longer distances of continuous towing, relays of horses are provided at changing stations, situated from 20 to 25 miles apart.

A towpath, which may be the property of the canal company or of a separate company, is not infrequently continuous for a considerable distance alongside the canal, except at the bridges and tunnels, but occasionally it changes from one side of the navigation to the other, and on some waterways there is no connecting bridge in the vicinity. In that case the horse is ferried across on a regularly instituted ferry, or on a special horse-boat towed by the trading-vessel, or even, in a few cases, by the boat which is being towed. In some parts of Bedfordshire, the horses, whilst towing, have to jump the rather high and clumsy stiles which are erected at the points where the field boundaries intersect the towpath.

Steam haulage on canals dates from the early days of the Bridgewater undertaking, when a Captain Sankey, R.N., visited Worsley, the seat of the Duke of Bridgewater, to conduct some experiments in steam towage, which were rather unsuccessful, for, despite the fact that the tow did not travel faster than one and a half miles an hour, such a large wave was thrown up that the experiments were abandoned, to prevent further damage to the banks.

In 1802, Symington started the stern-wheel tug, *Charlotte Dundas*, on the Forth and Clyde Canal. She was propelled at a speed of about two and a half miles per hour by a single paddle placed aft, driven directly from a horizontal condensing engine; but the wave thrown up was so considerable and the damage to the banks such, that the directors of the canal interdicted her running after she had plied for but a short time.

Steam-tugs are in great request on the larger canals, where a string of barges can be towed by a single steamer; but they are not used so considerably on the smaller canals, for the installation of an engine in a narrow boat reduces its cargo capacity so seriously that there is but little chance of its profitable employment, added to which the butty boat in tow not infrequently has to be cast off at each lock and be hauled into the lock by manual labour.

Table I. shows the dimensions of boats in use on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and the increase in cargo capacity, with submergence.

On the American rivers and waterways steamers of large cargo capacity not infrequently haul a very considerable tow of barges or rafts, loaded in the aggregate with a cargo of several thousand tons. But owing to the extreme narrowness of the waterways in this country and the comparatively short distances between locks, no such hauls are in

Type.	Length.	Breadth.	Draught.	Load.	No of Butties in Tow.
	ft. in.	ft. in.	ft. in.	tons.	
Short Steamer	61 0	14 0	3 6	30	1 to 3
„ Tow Boat.	62 0	14 4	1 1	20	
			3 6	40	
			4 0	55	
Long Steamer	71 0	14 0	3 6	45	1 to 3
„ Tow Boat	72 0	14 4	3 0	40	
			3 6	60	
			4 0	70	

I. THE VARIATION IN THE CAPACITY OF BOATS, WITH IMMERSION, ON THE LEEDS AND LIVERPOOL CANAL.

any way possible, the maximum haul being a tow of four or five barges, excluding the compartment boats previously mentioned as in use on the Aire and Calder Navigation.

With the more general use of gas, oil, and electric motors on land, there has been a tendency to adapt one or other of these to the traction of canal boats, although there is but a comparatively small percentage of self-propelled canal boats plying upon the English waterways. Even the larger owners, such as Fellows, Morton and Co., have only about twenty self-propelled boats to about 200 ordinary boats.

Liquid fuel, with suitable burners, has proved its superiority over coal for propulsion both on land and sea, as Table II. shows.

STEAMSHIPS.	
Hamburg-American Line, ss. .	1.55
Austrian Lloyd, ss.	1.82
Shell Transport, ss.	1.85 to 2.19
RAILWAYS.	
English—Great Eastern . . .	1.93
Japanese—Imperial	1.97
Mexican—Central	1.84
Tehuantepec . . .	2.03
American—Southern Pacific .	1.90
Great Northern . .	1.94

II. THE STEAM-RAISING OR CALORIFIC VALUE OF LIQUID FUEL COMPARED WITH THAT OF COAL.

It is somewhat surprising that it has not been more generally tried for canal traction in this country, although of course one realises that there is the risk of fire, which would be a serious disaster if it occurred in one of the long tunnels. There is also the objection, particularly in the case of paraffin, of tainting the cargo with the fumes or leakage of the oil. A Diesel motor, burning crude petroleum, has been used in an experimental tug running upon one of the Lancashire canals, but the results have not yet been published, so far as the writer is aware.

Producer gas, which is made by drawing air and steam through incandescent coal or coke, although having a less calorific value than coal gas, owing to the presence in it of the nitrogen, which forms 79 per cent. of the volume of the indrawn air, has still, when used in a gas-engine, a thermal efficiency one and a half to two times greater than that of the same weight of coal or coke when burnt under a boiler to raise steam for an engine. Quite recently some very interesting comparative experiments were made on a German waterway between a four-cylinder motor-boat of about seventy horse-power, using producer gas, and a steamboat of similar dimensions and power. Both were running at the same speed and under similar conditions, and the fuel consumption was greatly in favour of the motor-boat.

Early in the beginning of the year 1906 a suction gas motor-barge, the *Duchess*, fitted with a two-cylinder single-acting Thornycroft gas-engine, developing about thirty-five horse-power, set out on a round trip of 560 miles over the English canals, going from London to Birmingham, thence to Manchester, and back to London, on a total coal consumption of only 4·8 tons. The trip was very well described by Mr. Norman Thomson in the columns of the *Standard*, between January and March of that year. According to that account, it navigated the Manchester Ship Canal at the rate of six miles per hour, and the river Thames at the rate of five and three-quarter miles per hour including the passage of two locks. On the Grand Junction Canal it towed four loaded barges and a steam-tug through the Braunston tunnel at the rate of 1·1 miles per hour, when working with only one cylinder and at the rate of 1·9 miles per hour when working with both cylinders. On the Bridge-

water Canal it towed two fully freighted sixty-ton flats at a speed of 2·7 miles per hour. On the broader and deeper section of the Weaver Navigation (the locks on which are 229 feet long, 42 feet 6 inches wide, and admit a vessel drawing 10 feet 5 inches), but with a less load in tow, it maintained a speed of 3·7 miles per hour. On a section of the Shropshire Union Canal it traversed a distance of 8·5 miles, including two locks, at the rate of 2·3 miles per hour. It negotiated the twenty-one locks on the Birmingham Canal at Wolverhampton, which are spread over a distance of 1·6 miles, in 126 minutes, and it passed through the Audlem and Adderley series of twenty locks, spread over a distance of three miles on the Shropshire Union Canal, in 130 minutes. Owing to the bad condition of the canal bed on various sections of the route it was occasionally necessary to clear the propeller of the several pieces of old rope, sacking, and other *débris* which befouled it.

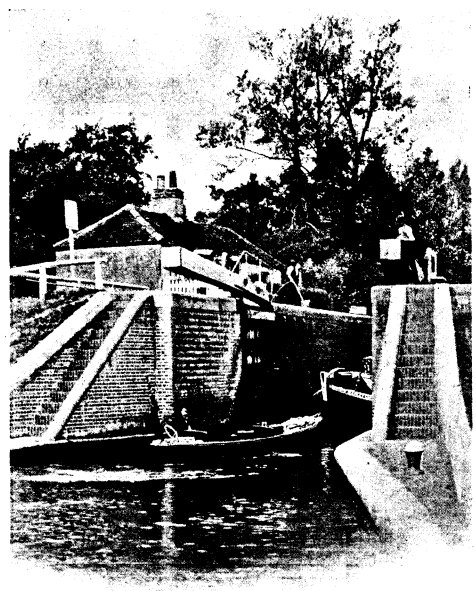


Photo by] [*Clarke & Hyde.*

A LOCK ON THE GRAND JUNCTION CANAL.

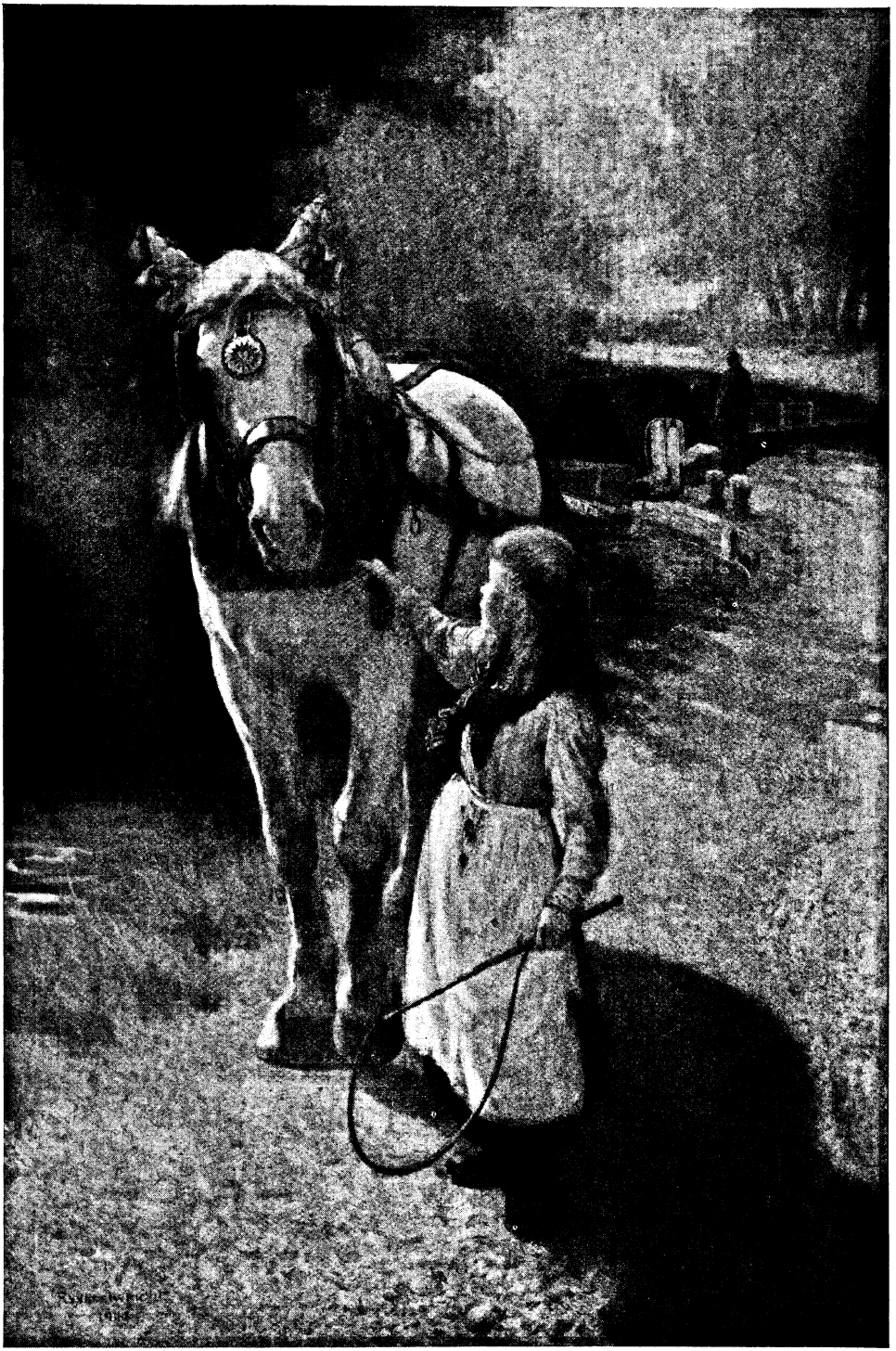
Some objections have been raised to the use of producer gas in the generation of motive power in a canal boat. Firstly, it is alleged that there is a risk of asphyxiation from the escaping gas, especially when the boat is passing through a tunnel; and secondly, that the plant occupies more space than a steam-engine. But this is not so; for although the engine is somewhat larger than a steam-engine, the producer does not occupy so much space as a steam-boiler, so that the total engine-room space is therefore somewhat less in the gasboat than in the steamboat. And one might just as well deprecate the use of a steam-engine for fear of a bursting boiler, as decry the use of the producer gas-engine for fear of leaks, the more so as in a suction gas producer there would be a tendency to inflow of air rather than an outflow of gas.

It has been proposed to install an electric motor operating a screw propeller in a boat, and drive it by current taken from storage batteries; but the excessive weight of accumulators of adequate capacity, and the frequent necessity for recharging the batteries, place the proposals outside the range of economic operation.

It has also been proposed to drive a motor on the boat with current taken from an overhead wire by a trolley running upon it, and as propulsion dead ahead is much more effective than an oblique pull, this would be a commendable system; but it has the very serious objection that the faster traffic could not pass the slower, and also that no other system of traction could be adopted upon a system so equipped without running the risk of almost endless confusion, particularly with the ropes of the horse-hauled barges.

As another alternative it was proposed some years ago to install a narrow-gauge track on the towpath, upon which a small hauling electric locomotive could run; but there are very serious objections to the adoption of such a method in this country, since not only would the motor and its track and the overhead wire more or less monopolise the somewhat narrow towpath, to the exclusion of the horses towing other barges, but there would also be difficulties to overcome at the locks and at breaks in the towpath at tunnels or bridges, or where it crosses over from one side of the navigation to the other, also in the towing of traffic in two directions from a single towpath.

On the canal from Brussels to Charleroi electric tractors draw loads of about 350 tons at a speed of about two and a half miles per hour, and on the Teltow Canal, a new German canal connecting the rivers Havel and Spree, by linking up a series of intervening lakes, barges are towed over the canal sections by electric motors of special design, running on a metre gauge track of



"ON THE TOWING-PATH." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

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40lb. rails, laid on the towpath, on both sides of the waterway. The current is taken from an overhead wire, by a trolley running on it, and returned by the rails. The locomotive weighs about eight tons, and tows two barges at about 2·6 miles per hour, by means of a steel towrope, about 0·4 inches in diameter, attached to a towing-mast fixed to the front of the barge. This mast can be raised or lowered as required, to clear barges at rest and other obstructions.

The rope is not rigidly attached, but is fixed to a winding-drum, which, instead of being keyed on to the shaft, works through a friction clutch, which allows the rope to slip as soon as the pull on it exceeds 2,650lb. All jerks are thus taken up, and there is little or no risk of jerking the locomotive into the canal at starting. Also, to overcome the oblique pull canalwards of the towrope on the locomotive, the rail on the canal side is canted 0·9 inches above that on the other side, and the weight of the locomotive is concentrated towards the front and the landward side. Where the canal section ends and the lake section begins, the towing is taken up by a tug.

On another Continental navigation a similar type of tractor is used, except that as there is only one towpath, meeting tractors exchange barges. The towing-mast is a fixed one and is 30 feet high, thus clearing all obstructions likely to be encountered, and the current is taken from an overhead wire by a trolley running upon it, but connected to the motor by a flexible cord. On some Continental waterways the boat is propelled by pulling on a chain laid along the bed of the stream, but as the attached vessels are somewhat in the way of other self-propelled vessels using the waterway the method is falling somewhat into disuse. On a short section of one of the Continental canals vessels are propelled in both directions by attachment to an endless cable, supported on pulleys, attached to posts fixed along the two sides of the canal, and driven by a winding-engine at the rate of about 2·3 miles per hour. The attachment is made by passing a hauling-rope through an eye fixed to the driving-cable, the rope being wound on a drum, which slips at first till the vessel has taken up the velocity of the rope, when the drum is locked, and thus all danger of sudden strains on the cable at the starting of any vessel is obviated.

On one of the English canals a steam locomotive running on the bank was used experimentally for hauling for a time, but was eventually discontinued, mainly owing to trouble at locks and bridges. On estuarial waters, particularly the Thames and the Mersey, it is no uncommon sight to see barges and flats drifting with the ebb and flow of the tide, but this is such a fortuitous method of transit, that it is only worthy of the briefest passing notice.

The speed of traction is an important factor in the operation of a traffic system, as the efficiency of the whole system correspondingly increases with the speed of transit over it. The speed, however, of any vessel in a narrow waterway is limited by the ease with which the water gets past the vessel. For a moderate velocity, without a great expenditure of power, the width of the waterway should be at least twice that of the beam of the boat, whilst the depth should be at least one and a half times the draught of the boat, although, not infrequently, the keel only just clears the bed of the canal by a few inches; and the cross section of the channel should be not less than six times the area of the submerged amidship section of the vessel. If the maximum economic speed for any particular vessel on any particular waterway be exceeded, then there will be an expenditure of power out of all proportion to the increase in the speed, which will have been mainly expended in the production of a more or less considerable wave, which rolls up in front of the vessel and works havoc on the banks of the canal. Nor is it of much use acquiring any considerable speed on the comparatively short level reaches of the English canals; for over and above the effort wasted in producing the wave, the resistance, and consequently the engine-power, will vary roughly as the square of the velocity of propulsion. The time occupied in passing through the locks will be about the same for both high and low speeds and thus the average speed over the whole distance will not vary directly with the power expended in producing the two speeds; this difference will be still greater if one of the speeds exceeds the economical speed, to which I have already referred. Taking, for example, the case of two vessels of identical dimension, navigating a broad and deep canal, upon a thirty mile length of which there are thirty locks, one proceeds at three miles per hour and takes ten minutes to pass each lock, whilst the other proceeds at six miles per hour and takes the same time to pass through each lock; then, although the tractive effort will vary approximately as one to four, the times of navigating the whole section will only vary as three to two. And further,

Canal.	Minimum Top Water Width.	Depth.	Maximum Speed in miles per hour.	Draught of Vessel.	Net Tonnage.	Remarks.
	ft. in.	ft. in.				
North Sea . . .	357 3	32 2	4·86	over 6 ft. 6 in.		
			6·48	5 ft. to 6 ft.		
			8·10	under 5 ft.		
			4·86	tow in daytime.		
			3·24	tow at night.		
Königsberg . .	98 6	21 4	9·32	11 ft. 5¾ in.	up to 500	
			8·08	14 ft. 9 in.	,, 1,500	
			6·83	19 ft. 8¼ in.	over 1,500	
Kaiser Wilhelm .	216 0	28 0	6·13	26 ft. 3 in.		beam 65 ft. 6 in.
Manchester . .	150 0	28 0	7·0			
Corinth . . .	80 9	26 3	6·0	23 ft. 6 in.		beam 65 ft. 6 in.
Bruges-Maritime .	230 0	26 6	4·47			
Suez	203 0	26 3	2·0			In year 1883
		29 6	6·2	27 ft.		,, 1904

III. THE DIMENSIONS OF THE MORE IMPORTANT SHIP CANALS AND THE MAXIMUM PERMISSIBLE SPEED OF TRANSIT THEREON.

notwithstanding that many of the English canals have so small a cross section, this is not infrequently still further reduced at the points where the bridges cross the canal, and in the winter months, even though the canal may not be firmly encrusted over with ice, still lumps of drift ice will very seriously interfere with the navigation of the waterway, particularly where the channel is narrowest. It has also been experimentally demonstrated that the tractive effort is greater by one-sixth when the towed barge is near the bank, than when it is in mid-stream, so that in times of low water, as during a drought, or in shallow sections where the keel clears the bottom only by an inch or so, a correspondingly greater effort must be exerted to maintain even a low velocity; or if the tractive effort is not increased, the velocity is considerably diminished.

The speed of traction varies from one and a half to three miles per hour on the canals of small cross-sectional area, to six miles per hour on the larger canals. It is somewhat interesting in this connection to compare these velocities with the maximum permissible speeds on the more important ship canals (see Table III.).

If one studies the traffic returns of the railways and canals published by the Board of Trade, it will be seen that the total freight annually carried by the two traffic systems approximates to about 485 million tons, 95 per cent. of which is handled by the railways, and 2 per cent. is local canal traffic, whilst

Port	To Port	Distance in miles by			No. of Locks on Canal.	Average Distance in miles between Locks.	Maximum Dimensions in feet of a Boat making a through passage of the Canals.			No. of separate Controlling Authorities on route.		Average Time on Passage in hours, assuming a speed of 3*, 20, 12 miles per hour on the respective routes.		
		Canal	Rail	Sea			Length	Br'dth	Dr'ght	Canal	Rail	Canal	Rail	Sea
London .	Liverpool .	244	192	660	252	0·97	71·5	6·8	3·2	10	1	102	10	55
		256			190	1·35	71·9	6·8	3·5	9		101		
		267			282	0·95	71·5	6·7	3·5	11		112		
	Hull . .	282	197	225	164	1·72	70·0	7·0	3·5	7	2	108	10	19
		305			148	2·06	72·0	6·8	3·5	9		114		
	Sharpness .	191	144	560	102	1·87	70·0	11·0	3·5	4	2	72	7	47
		219			230	0·95	71·5	7·0	3·5	9		92		
	Avonmouth	177	128	540	130	1·36	73·0	13·0	3·5	3	2	70	6	45
Liverpool	Hull . .	187	126	730	104	1·80	62·0	14·2	3·7	4	2	71	6	61
	,, . .	159			149	1·07	57·5	14·1	4·0	8		65		
	,, . .	149			152	0·98	57·5	7·0	3·2	11		62		
	Sharpness .	160	158	295	84	1·90	71·5	6·7	3·2	6	3	60	8	25
	,, .	189			162	1·17	71·5	6·7	3·5	9		76		

IV. THE DISTANCES BETWEEN CERTAIN PORTS BY CANAL, RAILWAY, AND SEA.

* It is assumed that the time taken to pass through each lock is 5 minutes.

the remainder is long distance canal traffic. This latter figure probably needs some correction, since the local traffic on most of the busy canals greatly exceeds the bulk of the long distance traffic; but owing to the method of recording the returns for each canal as "neither loaded nor discharged on the canal," "loaded, but not discharged on the canal," "discharged, but not loaded on the canal," it is more than probable that the long distance traffic is considerably inflated by repeated duplication and should be reduced by about two-thirds of its nominal value. Of course, this duplication also occurs to a small extent in the railway returns, but not to anything like the same amount, since many busy ports and industrial centres are connected by the track of a single company, whilst a long distance canal route ranges over the properties of several companies, as Table IV. shows.

If, further, one attempts to estimate the whole traffic movement in the United Kingdom, excluding the intramural traffic, which in all probability is, for the most part, recorded in the other returns, one finds that the canals carry only about 4 per cent. and the railways carry 77 per cent., whilst the remainder is dealt with by coasting steamers and road vehicles.

As coasters are improving, not only in design, but also in the frequency and regularity of their service, and as motor vehicles and motor trains of the Renard type will more and more be used on the roads, it follows that this class of traffic will at least tend to increase in volume, and equally so the railways will retain the traffic of a perishable nature, such as fish, fruit, meat, and milk, as well as the quick parcel traffic, developed by the modern system of trading, in which the retailer, instead of locking up a large capital in warehousing stock, relies on the telephone or the post and quick delivery service to supply just sufficient stock to meet current requirements. Further, the railway companies, by the development and equipment of steamship lines and ports such as Grimsby, Goole, Southampton, Heysham, Fleetwood, Grangemouth, and Harwich, have assured to themselves the handling of a considerable portion of the oversea traffic. There is not, therefore, a very great prospect of even the rehabilitated waterways diverting much of the traffic from the other transit systems, and the influence of the canals in reducing the railway rates cannot prove very effective, as few districts are or can be served by canals and railways in competition, added to which about two-thirds of the rates are already fairly low, since they are at present regulated by the competition of coasters, which can certainly handle traffic cheaper than can the canals.

NOTE.—*The concluding article of this series will deal with cost of transport and general financial considerations affecting any restoration of inland waterways.*



JOHN SMEATON.

One of the fathers of the profession of civil engineering who concentrated their intellects upon the construction of canals, after the opening of the first Bridgewater Canals.

VAL LE MORTE.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "The Garden of Lies," "Buchanan's Wife," "The Quest," etc.

PENMARCH looks on Morning Downs and Morning Downs look on the sea. The castle is gone now, but anciently it sat atop its swelling hill, and northward from it the five marches spread fanwise from White Fens on the west to the barren waste of the great moor. The long black line to the north was Beale Forest; beyond that, out of eyesight, Gauntres and Holy Shield; northward still, over scarp and scaur, Mortaise Water and far-off Tintagel.

At the time of the mad business with which we have to deal, the Earl was ten years dead, and his lady, the Countess Alianor, sat in his place, holding gentle rein and unwilling whip over Penmarch for the boy Troilus, who was nearing his majority. With the two dwelt sometimes old Breuce's cousin Steven, called le Noir—Steven of the Out Isles, but that his lands there had been, by the fortunes of war, reft from him—a grave, strong man, a man of tenderness, a very knightly man who had fought good fights for God, and for the right, and for a certain precious thing which he bore secretly in his heart.

The Countess Alianor must have been, at this time, near eight-and-thirty, which is eight years more than she looked. She was very beautiful in the fair Breton fashion (she had come out of Little Britain), tall, with yellow hair, and brave, brown eyes that rested a long time where she turned them, and a sweet mouth that smiled slowly, and a full, round throat. She moved as she smiled, slowly, and as it were sweetly—a queenly woman, or such as one's fancy would have a queen to be.

As for the boy, he looked like his mother, but was more restless—inquisitive after his age and kind. He was a good lad, but young and untried—younger than his years; to be brief, an unlicked cub, but you must love him because he was honest and clean and looked you straight in the eyes. With that thoroughgoing hero-worship which is possible only to youth, he regarded Steven, who had indeed been a sort of father to him, as the very flower of knighthood—a splendid being in quality somewhere between Sir Lancelot du Lac and that ancient lover's holy son Galahad.

So here briefly and most inadequately you have the three pictured, and with the portraits before us we may get to our tale.

Steven was at Penmarch, had been there for a twelvemonth, for he was training the young lad in arms, and in all such matters as go beyond the natural province of mother or priest. He sat one morning with the Countess Alianor in a certain upper tower-chamber which overlooked the forecourt of the castle, fronted the swelling downs beyond, and so gazed out to sea. He read, while the lady wrought over her broidering, out of a certain manuscript book which had been made by a clerk at Holy Shield—a history, gathered from lay and tale and spoken word, of King Arthur and the early beginnings of his holy reign. He read by chance of the girl-child born to Queen Morgan le Fay, the sorceress, Arthur's sister, King Urien's wife, of the dread and terror of the Queen, and of how the child, devil-begotten, was given secretly to Merlin, and by him, secretly in the darkness of night, borne to Beale Forest to an enchanted spot, a cleft in the earth called Val le Morte, and there hidden in a rock.

Spake Merlin in the ancient book of the clerk of Holy Shield—

"Now rest thee here, my child, and sleep and wake not, for wit thou well thou shalt sleep till all of us that live be dead and dissolved in dust; till other times be come in Britain and other folks. Then I know," said Merlin, "that one shall come to wake thee at last, and of his coming shall strange and dire things ensue. For to this end, my child, wast thou begotten and born."

Steven looked up from his reading and saw that the Countess Alianor's hands were still over her embroidery, and that her eyes were

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fixed upon the space without the open window of the tower-chamber, fixed and wide and absent. The book slid from his knees to the floor, and he let it lie there.

"Lady," he said, "you were not listening."

She turned to him with a little start, and she put out one white hand towards him as if in apology, smiling her slow smile.

"No, Steven," said she. "My thoughts were errant. I think I have no mind this morning for ancient tales. I heard your voice only as you read, not the words. Ah, Steven," said she, "it is very good to have you here at Penmarch! I lean upon your strength and it comforts me. Your very voice, Steven, breathes strength and peace and security. I sat listening to it, as one lists to low music, in quiet of soul."

The man bent his head that his eyes might be hidden.

"That is a thing very sweet to hear, lady," said he, and then fell silent, for it was not his way to speak freely what was in his heart. And after a little time the Countess Alianor pushed her broidery frame away from her and rose to her feet sighing. She came to where the man sat with his head bowed, his strong hands hanging idle between his knees, and she laid her hands upon his shoulders, standing close before him.

"Oh, Steven, Steven!" she said very low, "there is no other in all the world, I think, equal to you." She said—oddly enough in the words of Ector's lament over dead Lancelot—"The courtliest knight that ever bare shield; the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman—the kindest man that ever strake with sword; the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights; the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies; the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest!"

She said this very sweetly, looking down upon the man's bent head, and something like a sob broke from his throat, and she felt his body tremble under her hands.

"There is no other in all the world equal to you, Steven," she said again. "Oh, I would I had never sworn what I swore to Breuce when he died! It was unknightly in him to ask it of me. I would I might grant you that comfort your heart goes aching for, Steven! It would gladden me as well as you. Oh, never a man so sweetly and so faithfully and so long served a woman—asking nothing in return! I would I might make you glad, Steven!"

He rose before her, towering in his great, calm strength, and his eyes met hers without fear or passion. The storm had gone out of him.

"You make me glad, my lady," said he. "In service there is comfort, reward, and peace of soul. Let me serve you and the lad always. Therein I shall be as glad as any man may be. The—rest is dreams—dreams. I would not have you break your vow to Breuce. He asked it of you for the boy's sake; lest in marrying again you cheat him of a mother's care."

"Ah!" she cried sharply. "He should have known me better than that! Could any take in my heart the place Troilus has there? Ah, never, Steven, never! Not even you."

"And so," said he, "we must live for him—for Troilus. You are his mother who gave him life, and I—why, he is like a son to me. Like the fair, brave son I have seen in—my dreams—such as I might have reared and—taught and counselled and given to the world, if only—if only——"

"Steven! Steven!" she cried, weeping, and hid her face against the man's arm as she stood before him.

A shout and a snatch of gay song came up from the courtyard below. The Countess ran to the open window.

"It is Troilus, Steven, Troilus!" she said, and Steven came behind her to see. The lad was mounting his favourite horse, which a stable-boy held for him. He was in hunting-gear, with a soft leathern tunic and a plumed cap. A white gerfalcon in chaperon and belled jest sat upon his wrist, and the little bell tinkled as the bird stirred and shook itself with its master's movements.

The Lady Alianor called, and Troilus looked up. He saw the two in the tower window and waved his free hand, blowing a kiss to his mother.

"I ride to the moor," he sang out in his high voice, "to try the white 'haggard' here. Yesterday he lost the quarry twice. I shall wring his neck if he does it to-day." He laughed, kissing his hand once more, and rode out over the drawbridge, turning eastward to skirt the castle walls.

The two at the window watched him out of sight, and at last turned back into the chamber. The woman's eyes were wet.

"A sweet lad, Steven!" she said. "Ah, I am a very foolish, fond mother, It stabs my heart to see him ride away alone thus. Such perils might befall him. Such dangers

lurk on moor or in wood! If he should come to harm, I must surely die of it."

"He will come to no harm, my lady," said Steven of the Out Isles. "The lad shall go safe while I live. Body and soul I stand ready to give up for him—body and soul. Never forget that!"

The Countess Alianor repeated the words softly—

"'Body and soul. Body and soul!'"

All at once she turned to him. She drew his head down with her white hands and kissed him on the brow.

"There is no other in all the world equal to you, Steven," she said. "We lean upon your strength—Troilus and I."

* * * * *

But the lad Troilus rode briskly through the lanes and across the tilled fields of Queen's March, and sang as he rode. He bore northward and, after an hour's time, came out through a fringe of wood to the edge of the great moor which swept bare and bleak, save for heather and gorse, to the eastward farther than eye could reach.

Hares were plentiful here. They started from under his horse's hoofs, scurrying away into the heather or into a fern-brake. Troilus slipped the thong which was made fast to the white gerfalcon's jess and raised the hood which covered its eyes. The bird blinked in the sudden light and ruffled its feathers with a little throaty croak of satisfaction.

"And now, my friend," said the lad, "I give you a chance to make up for yesterday's sins." He flew the hawk, and it rose at once and hung high in air, circling slowly, its fierce eyes on the heath below. It was, in the language of the sport, "noble." That is to say, it rose over its quarry, wheeling, and dropped upon it from above, instead of taking it in direct chase as "ignoble" birds do. But it was as yet only half-trained, and sometimes missed the prey or, having killed, showed temper upon being taken up and rebonneted, for it was a "haggard," a wild falcon caught after it had moulted. Birds that are taken young, before changing their plumage, are more easily taught.

The hawk paused all at once in its slow, wheeling flight, and for an instant seemed to hang motionless in air. Then it dropped, swift and true as an arrow. There was a squeal from the heather, and young Troilus shouted and spurred forward. The "haggard" had killed without fault this time.

But before the lad had covered the distance to the spot where the hawk's bolt-like flight had disappeared in the heath, a very strange thing happened. There came from the heaven above a sound as of rushing winds. For an instant the bright sunlight was darkened to Troilus's eyes, and something great and black and terrible, fanning gigantic pinions, dropped before him so close that his horse reared upright for fear and nearly threw him.

The lad gasped in sheer amazement and that momentary alarm which the bravest may feel upon occasion, but fear had no place in him—he was almost wholly without it—and as soon as he had quieted the frightened horse he slipped to the ground and, pulling at the long, dirk-like hunting-knife which hung at his side, he ran towards the spot where his gerfalcon had dropped and where this hideous wonder lay hidden. At the sight of it, however, he stopped suddenly in fresh amazement. The thing was a great bird, rusty black of colour, with naked head and neck, and evil eyes where a red fire dully burned. It crouched upon the ground, squat and loathsome, wings half extended, and its dull eyes glowed under their naked wrinkles of skin, looking up at the boy who stood before it. Troilus whispered a swift prayer. Beyond doubt this thing was a creature sent from hell to try his knighthood. Certainly it was no being of the wholesome earth. No such monster had ever before been seen of man. He raised the hunting-knife and moved forward. But as he moved, the great bird spread its wings, without hurry or noise, and before he could reach it hung in air just over his head. The spread of its pinions was far greater than the lad's own height, and he was tall. In the creature's talons he raged to see his falcon struggling feebly. The dead hare lay at his feet in the heather.

"Oh, for a bow or a lance!" cried young Troilus, stamping upon the earth. "With an arrow, a single arrow, I should have slain this foul monster! With a lance-thrust I could bring it to earth!"

All at once he bethought him of the long, heavy knife he had in his hand. He altered his hold upon it and stepped back a pace. The great bird hung still, a little above his head, its gigantic pinions fanning the air in slow, steady strokes. Troilus bent his body sidewise and with all his strength hurled the knife from him. He gave a little glad, fierce cry when he saw it strike the dingy breast and sink to its hilt. Then a sort of horror swept over him when no blood fell from the wound, when the bird's great wings still beat

their measured stroke, the scaly talons still held to the fluttering falcon. The creature bent its wrinkled head, and the dull, red eyes looked down into the lad's eyes; then it turned, very deliberately, and, no faster than a man might walk, moved away northward, flying low.

For a mazed moment Troilus watched, then he ran to his horse. "The thing must die!" he cried out. "With that knife in its breast it must die! It cannot fly far." He turned the horse's head and spurred forward over the moor. The bird moved before him, deliberate, slow. Its enormous wings seemed never to hasten their beat, yet if the boy pressed forward at a gallop, the thing was ever in its place a spear's length from his horse's head, making northward towards that low black line which was Beale Forest.

Once the good horse stumbled and all but fell, and twice it shook its head, neighing, as horses do when they are alone in a strange place or are afraid, but the rider spurred ever forward, rage at his heart and in his fixed eyes, his lips drawn close over shut teeth. He took no heed of time or place. He did not know that the way he rode was long, or that he had come into that stretch of moorland which was shunned by all men because it was held to be enchanted—as certain moors in all old countries are held. His eyes saw only that great foul flying thing whose pinions beat the air a spear's length before him, winging its deliberate way to the north. His anger had risen to a hot, sullen rage, beyond any rage his breast had ever known. If the horse had dropped under him, he would have struggled forward on foot till his limbs would no longer bear his weight.

They dipped into a hollow of the swelling downs and laboured up the slow farther slope. Then, beyond a thin line of gnarled oaks, an outpost of the forest thrown forward to front the moor, the ground rose sharply in scraps of reddish rock, and whins stood sentinel over the low-growing heather. Upon this slope the horse broke from his gallop to a wearied trot—from that to a foot-pace. His flanks streamed sweat and his breath laboured in swollen nostrils. Troilus gave a sobbing curse.

"The thing is the devil!" he cried aloud. "Will it never die?"

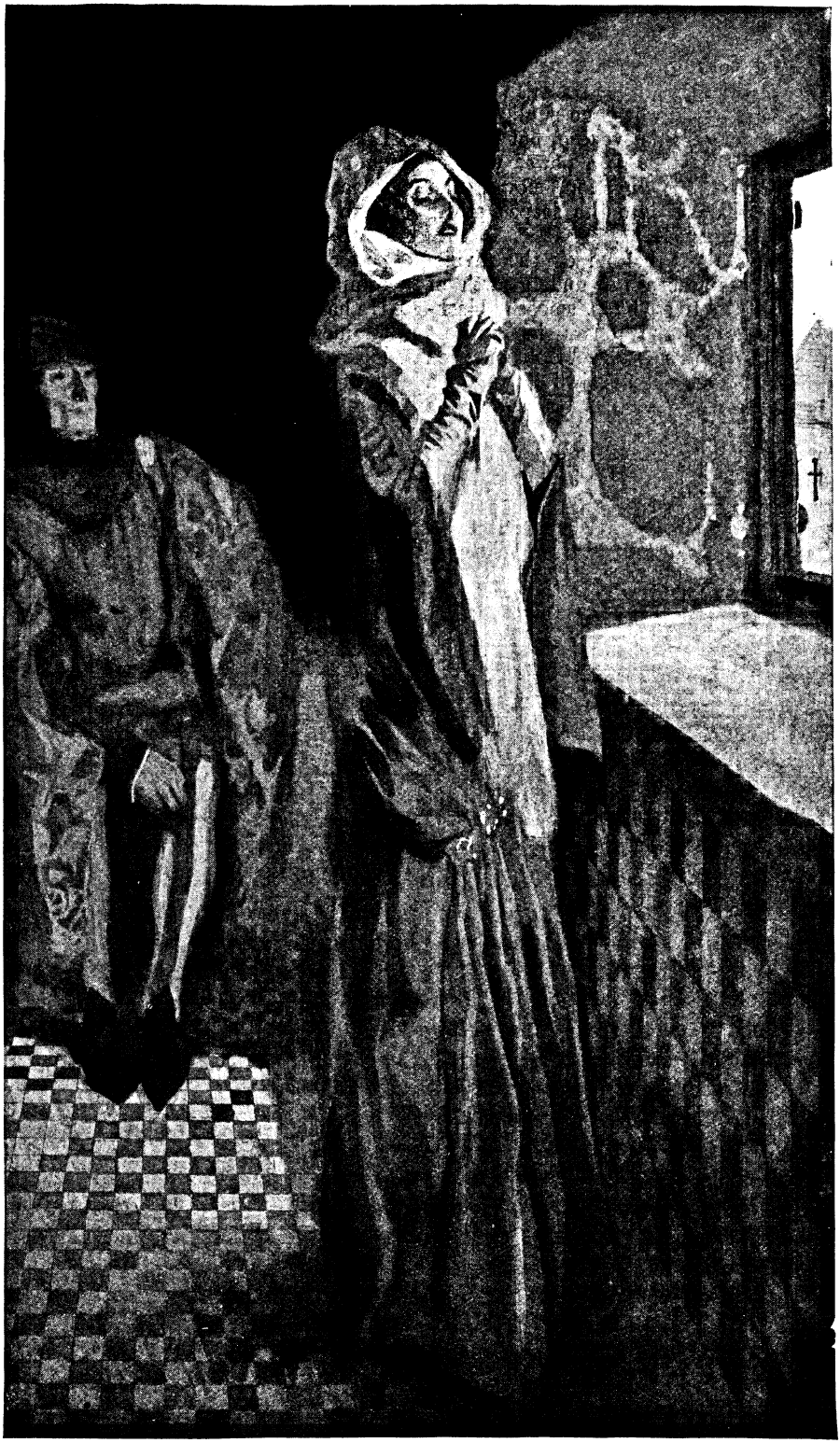
They came to the top of the rocky slope and stood upon a sort of ledge, a narrow table-land. Before them dropped away sheer a great cleft in the earth where yews and cypresses grew thick and tall and black, their slender tops below the horse's feet. From a clearer space near what seemed to be the middle of the gully a single thin column of smoke rose straight in the heavy air and, high above the tree-tops, spread out into a flat, unmoving pall. Beyond, the farther side of the cleft appeared to rise as abruptly as the hither side, and still beyond, Beale Forest stretched unbroken to the limit of the eye's far reach.

Troilus dismounted and stood at the brink of the rocky ledge. Before him the strange, gigantic bird hung in air for an instant motionless. Then very slowly it wheeled in a half-circle, and its red eyes fronted him. As he watched, the loathsome head dropped and at last swung lifeless from the great body, the wings flapped once and were still. Then the creature began to fall. It fell, hurtling silently down into that dark chasm below the lad's feet and disappeared among the slender tree-tops.

It was in this moment that the obsession of rage which had flamed in Troilus's heart died suddenly, and an odd chill, which was not outright fear, but dread and a sense of unearthly mystery, settled there. His eyes widened as they gazed into those still depths below him, and he was all at once aware that he wanted to flee. It seemed to him that out of the hidden chasm at his feet arose a cold and palpable breath which reeked of horror and of things graveyardish. It smelled of dampness and decay, and he shivered in it.

Once he turned away to where in the wholesome midday sunlight his horse stood with drooping head and distended nostrils. Then, though his feet strove to hurry him from the place, he turned again, crying out against himself an angry word of scorn, and once more faced the cleft in the earth where rose those still and dark and pointed tree-tops, the single column of mysterious smoke, and the breath which smelled of horror.

"I am a fool!" he said angrily. "I am a womanish fool! What is this place but a valley in the forest? The great bird is dead with my knife in its body down yonder. Shall I not fetch it up?" He laughed and started down the steep slope, holding himself by bush and whin and sapling. Once only he laughed, then an odd gravity came upon him and endured. He left the sunlight, passing under the shadow of a shelf of rock which projected from the bank, and that breath which above had risen to him faintly smote him chill in the face, pierced clammily through his leathern tunic, tingled cold in his fingers. With it enchantment folded its



"'It is Troilus, Steven, Troilus!' she said."

icy veil about the lad, and thereafter he walked in a spell. The acrid odour of cypress and yew and box was in his nostrils with the reek of damp earth where no sunlight ever came. Fear, not panic-evoking, but passive, filled all his being. But a power without himself, not of his direction, moved him on down and down into the deeper, stiller shadows below.

He came to the bottom of the ravine. Here there was no brush or undergrowth of any kind. The trees, huge, smooth, black-boled, stood like the pillars in a great cathedral. Very high overhead they branched and leaved, but through their foliage only a faint green light filtered. Underfoot the earth was dark and mossy, with here and there a clump of fungus which took strange, unearthly shapes in the shadowy twilight. Far away among the black-boled trees the lad saw a clearer, lighter space, and from its centre rose the thin column of smoke. It seemed to come from the earth, so the fire, whatever its nature, must have been underground.

Troilus walked forward. He was without conscious thought of any kind. That power, not within him, which moved his feet, bore him onward, and at length turned him to one side into a sort of aisle between two rows of towering trees. He came at last to a heap of gigantic rocks grown over with moss and lichens. On the earth before it lay the bird which he had followed so eagerly and so far. It lay huddled, with outstretched pinions, and it was dead. Under it the falcon lay dead also, and from the great bird's body stood out the haft of the hunting-knife which had slain it. Troilus stooped and drew his knife from its place. A single dark drop of blood followed the point and glistened upon the rusty feathers.

He looked up to the heap of boulders. They were too great to have been set there by man, but there seemed to be design in their placing. It was as if Titans had built a mammoth cairn there. The face of one of the stones was flat. Seemingly it had been roughly dressed. Troilus looked closer, and he thought he saw under moss and lichen the semblance of a chiselled letter. With the blade of his knife he set to work at scraping, and presently stood off to look again.

A single word fronted him from the stone's flat face: "*Entra.*"

A little shiver wrung him. "*Entra.*"

Enter *what? And to what?* What dreadful mysteries lay within that cairn of gigantic boulders cloaked in immemorial moss? Once while at his scraping it had seemed to him that under the knife's pressure the great stone had stirred a hairbreadth, had rocked just perceptibly. He had seen balanced stones before. There were several on a moor near Gauntres. All men knew of them. Kingly giants of antiquity had set them there.

"*Entra.*" The lad felt strangely that a power mighty, terrible, beyond resistance or comprehension, was closing in upon him. He had no strength to fight it. Once he strained backward and turned his head to look over his shoulder. His eyes saw only the towering tree-trunks and the dim light among them; far away that thin, pale column of upstreaming smoke. His ears ached with the deathly silence of the place, and he was very cold.

He looked again before him, and he gave a single, long, slow, deep-breathed sigh. Fate, pre-ordained, ancient, irresistible, enclosed him in her trap. He took a step forward and put out his hand upon the carven stone.

* * * * *

Neither the Countess Alianor nor Black Steven saw the lad when he returned from that day's hawking, but at the evening meal he was there, silent, white-faced, given over to fits of abstracted staring, heedless of his words and of the questions they put to him. His mother kissed him, cried out that his lips were cold, and made him drink a beaker of heated wine with spices. She would have it that he had taken a chill on the wind-swept moor, and hung over him with anxious solicitude.

Steven watched the boy closely and held his tongue. But later, when the meal was done, and Troilus, pleading great weariness, gone to his bed, the man climbed to the tower top, and there under the stars and the yellow moon walked the battlements for half the night through. Very late he also went to his bed. On the way, a whim led him to the door of the little chapel built within the stronghold's walls. In the dim light of the single lamp there, young Troilus knelt before the altar and prayed aloud that his feet might be withheld from temptation and from the Powers of Darkness. Steven turned away. His eyes were grave and troubled.

* * * * *

On the next morning Troilus rode out as was his custom. The elder man gave him

five minutes and followed, keeping out of sight in the lanes or behind hedgerows. The lad rode to the edge of the moor, and there drew rein. He sat for a long time gazing northward, then turned back and rode home again. He spurred as if Fear rode at his heels, and his face, when he passed Sir Steven lying perdu in a thicket, was drawn and of a curious colour—greenish white.

On the next day the same thing occurred, only at the edge of the barren moor the boy sat longer upon his horse, gazing to the north where lay that low, black line which was Beale Forest, and when he returned, he wandered restlessly, like one distraught, over the castle and about the castle-yard. Once again Steven came upon him praying before the altar of the little chapel.

On the third day he did not ride forth at all. He spent the morning among his young falcons—*niais branchiers* and *sors*—who were leashed *en bloc* in their little meadow, feeding them their *pât* from the end of a swinging *leurre*, and teaching them to bear the little belled jesses without ill-temper. But when Steven sought him out, he escaped as quickly as he might without discourtesy. Steven saw that the lad's eyes were haggard and tortured, and that the colour came and went feverishly in his cheeks.

In the great hall before the evening meal the Lady Alianor came upon her brother-in-law and besought him anxiously.

"What is it, Steven, that has come to Troilus?" she said. "The lad moves in a dream. He is not himself. I am frightened for him." Steven cloaked his own fears and forced a laugh.

"It is nothing, lady," said he. "The ways of a lad are beyond reason or understanding, as are the ways of a maid. Do not fret yourself. Troilus shall come to no harm. Have I not sworn that? I swear it again. He is in my care. He shall come to no harm." She smiled upon him a little reassured. There was great trust in her beautiful eyes.

"You are very strong," she said. "I lean upon your strength. Guard my son, Steven! He has no father but you. We lie in your hands, Troilus and I."

And that evening meal went as before, the lad silent, absent, brooding whitely over his meat and drink. When it was done, he kissed his mother and said that he would go to his bed. Again he was weary. He kissed her with more than his common tenderness, looking strangely into her eyes. Steven watched. The Countess held her son for a little time in talk, and the elder man slipped from the room. He went very quickly to the armoury, which was untended at that hour. There he put on him a mail shirt, but no other gear. He took his sword and shield, leaving the lance behind, and went at once to the stables. Horse and man left the castle-yard by a small postern gate and rode through the night eastward and north. At the edge of the moonlit moor they took cover and waited. Black Steven prayed earnestly to God and to His Son and to the Holy Virgin.

He had waited not above an hour's quarter when from the west there came the beat of hoofs. Steven cried once more upon his God for light and direction. Troilus rode by spurring. At the edge of the moor he drew rein for a little and looked back. He sat listening as if for possible pursuit. He was so near the covert that his uncle could see his face in the moonlight, and the face twisted and writhed unboyishly. He paused only for a moment, turned in his saddle, looking towards Penmarch. Then he gave a sort of dry sob and rode on northward.

Steven of the Out Isles followed. He did not press too close upon the boy lest his horse's footfalls be heard, but hung back, keeping the other just in sight. The moon shone at its fullest, but a wrack of clouds was driving up from the west, and the wind was freshening and boded rain. At times, when one of the fleeing clouds cloaked the moon's face, the great stretch of open plain would go suddenly black as black velvet. Then in another moment a flash of silver light would slant down and, far ahead of him, spurring on into the gloomy north, Steven would see young Troilus, head bent, never turning nor looking back.

So they rode steadily on and on over the swelling heath-clad moor, while the moon darkened and flashed over their heads, and the fresh west wind tore past their faces. They came each in his turn to that thin line of oaks, that first outpost of Beale Forest, whence ledge and scarp rose swiftly to the narrow table-land. There the boy eased his horse, allowing the beast to pick its slow way upward among whins and boulders. Steven waited in the cover of the trees. He had never been here before—few men had—but some inner sense warned him that his ride was near its end, and he drew rein to watch. It chanced just then that the clouds opened for a long space and the moonlight lay bright upon the earth. The labouring horse with its still rider were cut sharp against the sky to the man who watched below. He saw the

horse halt at the crest of the rising ground, and he saw the boy Troilus dismount. He began to tremble with strange, unformed forebodings.

The lad above him turned once more upon his feet and looked backward over the plain —a long look. Then with head bent and shoulders drooping he went on and was lost to sight.

Steven climbed the hill on foot, leaving his horse under the oak trees. The other animal saw him approaching and neighed. He came at last, a bit breathless, where the beast was and stroked its wet neck. It rubbed its nozzle against him and, when he made as if to go on where the lad Troilus had gone before, tried to follow.

The moonlight still held so that the man saw how he stood upon a narrow ridge, saw the swift descent before him, the pointed tree-tops grey in that silver light. Then a cloud came and there was blackness. He stared into the gulf of gloom which yawned at his feet. Presently he was aware of yellow gleams through the tree-tops. A fire burned below. He listened, and there was no slightest sound. At last a faint crackling with a soft rush as of falling pebbles. That would be Troilus stumbling in the dark as he made his way down the declivity. Followed again an aching stillness. Then suddenly a single, high, shrill cry came up from the depths—a woman's cry—mad, joyous, triumphant, terrible—trebly terrible upon that awful silence. It rose and held, and at last died in sobbing laughter.

II.

STEVEN stood upright on the brink of the valley, rigid and tingling with fear. Yet he was accounted as brave a knight as bore arms in that day. As to the young lad when he had first stood in that place, the acrid smell of cypress and yew and box came up to Steven's nostrils, and with it a cold breath of unutterable, unimagined horror. Had he happed otherwise upon the adventure, he would have run from the spot trembling, as even a brave man may, for very fright; but even with the chill horror which rose and enveloped him, shaking his bones, came another thing, a woman's face bright against the darkness, smiling with beautiful, trustful eyes. Out of the wind which bore past him a voice whispered and called—

"We lean upon your strength, Steven," it said, "Troilus and I!"

He took a great breath.

"The lad is in some devilish peril below there," he said to himself. "I must succour him." Also he said a hasty little prayer. Then he shifted his shield to his back by the slings which held it, and he took his sword in his right hand and began to descend the steep bank of the ravine.

It was slow work in the gloom, and slower in that he must go silently. More than his own peril hung upon his work this night. Foothold after foothold he felt for and tested and risked, grip after grip of hand upon bush or rock. He went for greater safety with his face towards the bank down which he crept. Then at last his feet came upon level earth, and he took a great breath of relief and turned about.

He stood among tall, smooth trees. Where he was there was profound gloom, but before him, in the midst of the gully, burned the fire which had first caught his eye, filling the night there with a leaping radiance. Taking heed to his feet, Steven went forward through the trees towards that blazing fire.

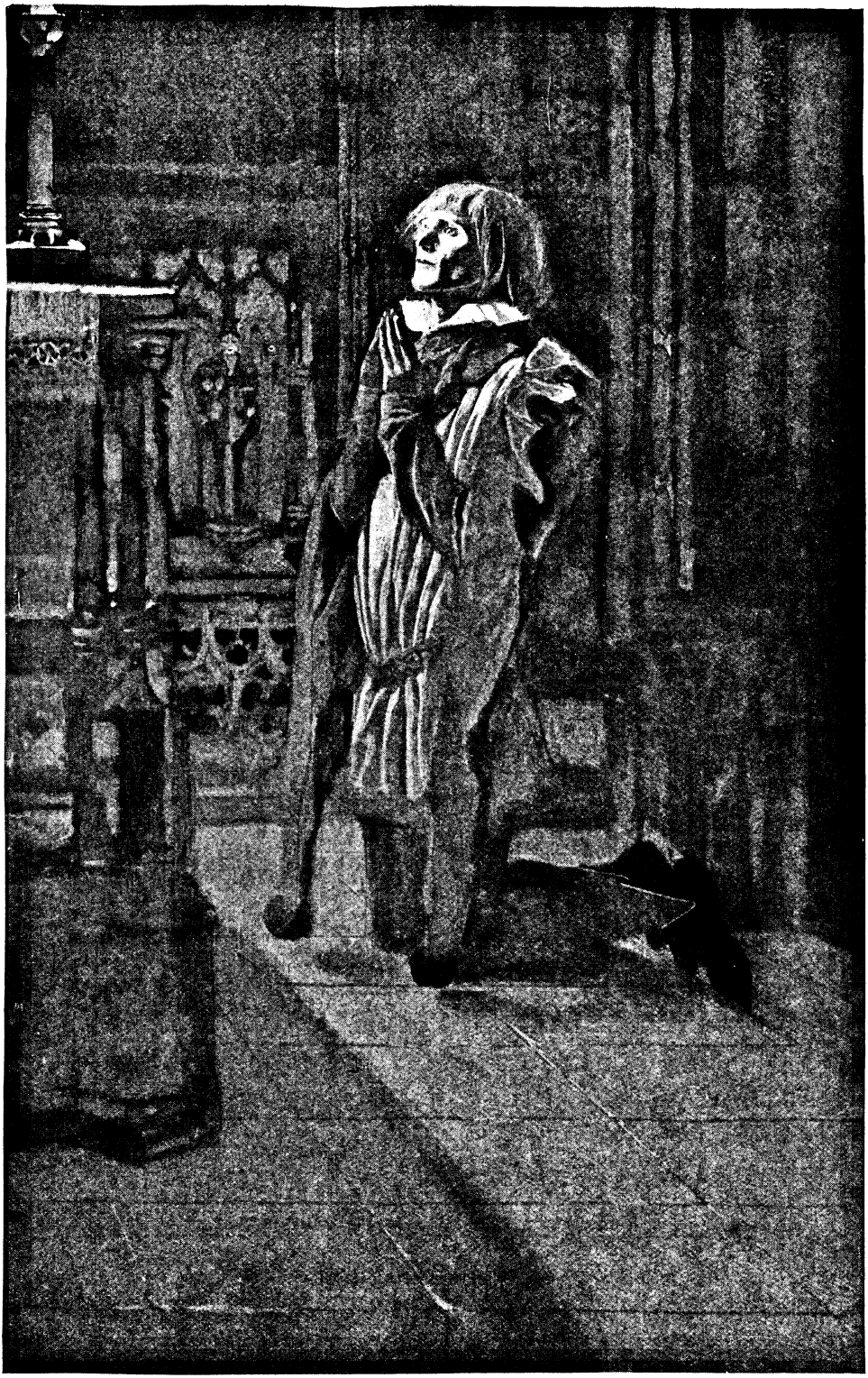
It chanced that, moving cautiously and seeking all possible shelter, he came very near the open space before his eyes caught full sight of what was there. He halted to look scarce three spears' length away.

In the bright light of the fire young Troilus stood erect, his face lifted so that he looked upward. The face was wrung and tortured. Man's two natures fought there very bitterly. His arms he held out at a little angle from his sides, stiff and straight, the hands hard-gripped. And upon Troilus's breast clung and laughed and wept and murmured a woman, a slim maid. Her back was towards the man who stood in darkness among the sheltering trees. He could see only that she was slender and very lithe, that her white arms clung to and caressed the lad before her, that she was garbed in something which glittered. The distance was too great for him to hear the words she spoke. Only the tone of her voice reached him. It coaxed, pleaded, besought, tempted.

Steven moved forward into the firelight. His feet made no sound upon the mossy earth, and for the first instant young Troilus did not see him. Then it chanced that his eyes wavered and he became aware of his kinsman still and silent, clad in shirt of mail, shield on back and sword in hand. He must have thought it a vision come in his extremity to haunt him, for one hand rose slowly to his staring eyes and covered them.

Then he gave a hoarse, sobbing cry, saying—

"Steven! Steven!"



"Young Troilus knelt before the altar and prayed aloud."

The woman who clung to him whirled sharply about. She shrieked once and once again. She caught her hands to her mouth and backed away to the very marge of the leaping fire, and she crouched there staring.

"Steven! Steven!" whispered Troilus, swaying on his feet. He stretched out his stiff arms and took a step forward. But Steven held up a hand to check him.

"Wait, boy!" said he. He did not stir his eyes from that woman who crouched by the fire. He saw that she was young, as she had seemed with her back turned—young, and, in her strange fashion, very beautiful. He saw that she had a great quantity of straight, black hair, unbound so that it hung in strands before and behind her shoulders; wisps of it fell across her long eyes. He saw that the skin of her face and neck and of her bare arms was even in that yellow light oddly pallid, without any colour at all, but that her mouth was red as a red flower, full-lipped and a little open. She was clad in one garment of cloth of gold, very thin, veil-like—so thin that as she moved the round shape of her slim body gleamed white through the shimmering texture.

She stared at him, crouching there, and presently, staring still, rose to her feet and stood upright, her arms dropping to her sides.

"Sir—Steven—of the—Out Isles!" the red mouth said, whispering. Steven took a step forward.

"And you—lady?" said he. "You?"

"I am Fraisne le Fay, Steven," said the girl, and raised her head, fronting him boldly. Fraisne le Fay—Morgan's daughter," said she. The man's mind flashed back to the book of the clerk of Holy Shield and the words he had read therein but three days back. He pointed a finger to where Troilus stood aside.

"And this lad," said he. "What is it you would have of him, sorceress?"

"His soul, Steven," she said oddly. "Such as I have none. I must have a soul, and it is destined that I have his."

"Not while I live," said Steven of the Out Isles. "Not while I live!"

The maid laughed; but not, it would seem, in mirth. She came a little forward towards the man. She moved with an odd grace as a dancer moves, or an animal, not in sudden jerks; and, as she moved, those rounding contours of her slim body came and went white through the gold of her garment.

"How shall such as you stand in my way?" she said.

"It is Fate, Sir Steven le Noir—destiny written and determined before you lived or your grandfather or his grandfather—when first I was begotten and born of a devil and a fay—when first I was shut into that rock yonder to await this waking. How shall such as you stand in Fate's way?"

"I do not know how," said the man, "but somehow, in some fashion, I shall save him. I have sworn that he shall go unharmed while I live."

She laughed again and put out one white hand as if she would touch his breast with it, but the man started quickly back, and he held up the hilt of his sword as one might hold up a cross.

"In Heaven's name!" he cried out. "Avoid me," said he, "by the Holy Rood!" And at that the maid shrank back cowering, and her face twisted as if she suffered pain.

Young Troilus dropped upon his knees with a groan and hid his face in his hands, but the other two did not heed him.

"You—may save yourself," said the woman, looking under her brows at Steven le Noir. "Yourself you may save, but not him. Things ancient and mighty and greater than man have given him to me. They are stronger than you with your gods and your crosses."

"Yet," said he bravely, "God will show me a way."

"What way?" she mocked. "What way?"

"I do not know," said Steven. "I wait." Again he raised the cross-hilt of his sword, and his lips stirred in prayer.

The maid fell to wheedling, coaxing, brought to the argument those lures a woman has ever ready to tempt with. Steven's eyes were blind to her, his ears deaf.

He turned sharply to where Troilus knelt trembling, his face in his hands.

"Up, lad, and away from this vile place!" he said, clapping a hand upon the boy's shoulder.

"Away!" said he. "Come with me, lad! Come home!" Behind him the woman cried out words strange to Steven's ears. Thereafter she laughed, high and shrill, a very mocking laugh.

"Aye, take him, Steven!" laughed Morgan's daughter. "Take him—if you can!" Steven shook the boy's shoulder with his hands. The boy looked up dully, and the face was without comprehension or intelligence—a sleeper's face, or an imbecile's.

A great burst of rage flared in the man's

heart, and he swung about, white-faced, with set teeth.

"You foul and sorceress hag!" he cried. "You devil in fair flesh!" The woman stood beside the fire laughing. He ran at her with his sword, but she laughed on and did not move.

"Aye, Steven!" said she. "Cut me down! Slay me!"

The sword was in air over her head, but suddenly the man's arm was held by some strange power, so that he could not stir it. And so for a long moment they stood, very close, looking into each other's eyes. Presently Steven's arm holding the sword dropped to his side. It was numb and well-nigh helpless. Once again he strove to raise it against the sorceress, but he could not.

She left off her mocking laughter.

"You cannot save him, Steven," she said very gravely, half under her breath. "He is mine. Fate has given him to me. You cannot save him. It is not I who combats you, it is Destiny."

"I will save him even from that," said the man. His eyes widened with a sudden thought, and once more he turned to that kneeling figure. From Troilus's side he looked to the slim, white girl by the fire.

"It were better a man should lose his life than his soul," said he. "Release this lad from your spell, or I will kill him with my sword. I cannot slay you, but him I may slay. At least I shall have kept his soul from perdition."

At that she cried out sharply: "Wait! Wait!" and he held his hand.

She knelt upon the ground close to the edge of the fire, which had by now burned down to embers and shed a dimmer, redder glow in the night. And she sat back upon her heels and was silent for a little time, staring into the heart of the glowing coals. Presently she turned her head and held out an arm.

"Come!" said she. "Come, Steven, let us talk of the matter."

"I will not treat with you," he said. "Release him, or he dies by my sword."

Again she waited for a little time silent, and again after it she said—

"Come! It will harm neither Troilus nor you." Then slowly, with stern face, he left the lad and came before her where she crouched.

The woman turned her face to the fire, and the firelight reddened it with a warm glow and burned warmly in her long eyes.

"You set great store by a soul, Steven," she said at last, musingly as it were.

"Aye," said Steven, "great store."

"And yet," she said, "you can tell me very little of this precious jewel for the sake of which you would do unnatural murder. What is this soul-thing, Steven, which is of so much dearer worth than life? Have you seen it, touched it, held it in your hand?"

"It is invisible," said he. "It is the precious breath of God."

"Who told you that?" she asked, looking into the fire.

"There was no need," said he, "that I be told. I know." The woman gave a little, low laugh.

"You know much more than any other man," she said. "You are wondrous wise, my friend. And so," she said after a silence, "and so, for this thing which you have not seen nor touched, but which you believe to be a breath, you would slay that lad yonder, your kinsman! A man must be very, very sure that he knows to do that."

The man took a deep breath, but he did not answer.

"A soul!" said she. "A something invisible—perhaps. Perhaps a nothing. Who shall say? There are other things, Steven—other wonderful things, strange, glorious, unknown to such as you—undreamt of. I could give him those things. Who shall say that they are not better than your puff of breath—your something that you cannot show me? There are other worlds, Steven, than this puny, plodding, work-a-day world—other splendid worlds. I could take him there. Who are you to say that his soul is worth more to him?"

"And yet," said Steven Le Noir, "you have drawn him hither to rob him of it. Why, since these wonders of yours are so glorious and so fair, should you wish to take from him his poor soul?"

She laughed again, softly, under her breath.

"That Destiny be fulfilled, Steven," said she. "That Fate take her course. It is fated that through me and him England shall be torn asunder and re-knit in another fashion—perchance a better one. The thing is not in our hands, it was wrought into the warp of Destiny while Arthur still sat upon his throne. Who are you and I that we should check Destiny's wheels? Come! Have done with this! You cannot fight against me."

Still the man did not speak, but stared dully upon the ground before him. Morgan's

daughter stretched one white arm behind her into the gloom that was without the fire's circle. She threw something upon the embers, and a flame leaped high in air. The smooth boles of the near-by trees sprang suddenly into view like live things rushing to attack.

"Steven!" said the witch-maid in a low voice. His gloomy eyes rose to hers.

"What do you love most in the world, Steven?" she asked. The man's face writhed and was still again.

"I will not tell you," said he.

"Yet," she said, "I know, and it is a woman. Tell me! Do you love her better than your soul's salvation, or do you cherish the more this invisible breath you prate of?"

The man's voice shook and trembled.

"Oh, better than a thousand souls, had I them!" said he. And at that she gave a sudden little cry.

"Then," she cried, with an edge of anger in her tone, "how dare you judge for that lad yonder which he shall possess, me or his paltry soul? How dare you, who love your lady better than a thousand souls, slay him if he love me better than but one? Come, my stern arbiter, let him speak for himself! I will free him from his sleep and we will let him choose. How dare you choose for him?"

She was for springing to her feet, but the man checked her with lifted hand.

"I will not trust you," he said. "You have set a spell upon him, wrapped him in sorceries. Though you free him from sleep, you will not free him from your chains."

She sat back again upon her heels, and for a space watched him sullenly under her dark brows. At last she said—

"Then you will slay him, Steven? You, his kinsman, the man who has played father to him, you will slay him as he sleeps there. Then, doubtless, you will bear his body back to Penmarch, back to the boy's mother, and wake her from her bed, saying: 'Here is your son, lady! I have killed him with my sword!'—You will do that, friend?"

Steven gave an exceedingly bitter groan and hid his face with his hands.

Presently the maid dragged herself nearer to him over the ground. Kneeling, she touched his knee, and he uncovered his eyes.

"Look upon me, Steven!" she said, pleading. She spread out her two arms, crouching before him in the firelight.

"Look well, Steven!" she said, whispering. "Am I not such as a man might love? You should know, who love so truly! Which would he choose, that boy yonder, his soul or me?" The red light fell upon her upturned face, and upon one outflung arm, and upon one side of her slim, round body, and she was very beautiful.

"Could not a man love me, Steven," she said, "even better than his little soul? Could he not?"

With all his great, simple strength he hated and feared her, and had it been possible he would have slain her where she knelt, but withal he was honest, too, and the honesty in him paid unwilling tribute to this creature's splendid beauty. There could be no doubt which that poor bewitched lad yonder would choose even were the spell to be lifted from him.

"Could not a man love me, Steven?" she begged, again touching his knee with her hand.

"Aye, sorceress," said he, "to his eternal perdition." And the witch-maid smiled at him in the red firelight.

"What is perdition, Steven?" she said whispering. "Is it bitter or is it sweet?"

"It is both, sorceress," said he.

She drew back from his gloomy eyes, sitting upon her heels, and once more turned her head to stare into the pulsing fire.

"Eh, Steven," she said presently, with a little low laugh, "though I be fay and not woman, till I shall have mated with mortal man, yet I find in me a most womanish perversity. You loathe and hate me with all your heart, do you not, Steven? Yet I would it had been you who waked me from my long sleep, and not that half-grown simpleton yonder. I would it had been you," she sighed.

"But Fate foreordained," she said, "must be fulfilled; the ancient prophecy be brought to pass."

Black Steven's eyes had been upon the boy, who knelt apart wrapped in his chains of thraldom. He turned his head slowly, and his eyes met the eyes of the witch-maid.

"How runs this ancient prophecy?" he asked in an odd, still tone. The woman stared at him.

"'Penmarch shall mate with Pendragon, and by their seed shall England be rent asunder,'" she said.

"Pendragon?" he questioned.

"Aye, Steven," she said. "Do you not see that I am the last of the House of Pendragon? Morgan le Fay, Uther's daughter, Arthur's sister, bore me. I have

lain in the rock where Merlin laid me, all these ages, waiting—waiting."

"Aye!" said Steven. "Aye! And if mortal man mate with you, he must lose his soul because you are a fay."

"As all men know," she said.

"Aye," said he, "as all men know." And he said the words of the ancient prophecy over again under his breath—

"'Penmarch shall mate with Pendragon, and by their seed shall England be rent asunder.'" He was very grave. He rose to his feet and walked a few paces back and forth in the firelight, his face upturned to the velvet gloom. The girl crouching beside the fire watched him with puzzled, uncomprehending eye.

Now prayed he aloud: "God, whom I have loved and served and worshipped, desert me not in this grim hour. Show me the way! Let me not fail her who leans upon me, nor the lad whom she has put in my hand to guard. Show me the way!"

Abruptly he spoke to the witch-maid, whose eyes stared at him.

"You cannot be turned from your vile purpose?" he said. "You will not free yon lad from his bondage unless I slay him?"

"*Fate* cannot be turned, Steven," said she. "It is not I."

He prayed again, wrenching each word from him as in agony.

"What must I do?" he asked of God. "Show me the way! Shall I slay him and bear him dead—to *her?*"

His face writhed suddenly. "That would slay her also. What shall I do?" His hard-wrung voice took a softer tone, and he almost smiled through his bitterness.

"'We lean upon your strength, Steven—Troilus and I.'" Then in a sort of trembling whisper: "My lady—my lady!"

He strode to the kneeling boy, who slept in his magic bonds, and with his two hands he lifted the bowed head, looking a long time into the boy's face. Thereafter he walked again with upturned eyes, his lips moving in who shall say what passionate prayers, what poignant self-searchings.

In the end, after much of this, he tossed his two hands in air, as the witch-maid saw, watching him, and he said aloud: "I cannot—fail you—lady, not even in this last."

He had the air of one who, after a long and very bitter struggle, has at last come to some grave determination.

Once more he turned to her who crouched waiting and wondering by the fire. His head drooped and he looked white and very tired.

"Loose the lad yonder and—let him go!" he said. There was in his weary tone something strange and momentous. Perhaps, fay though she was, it frightened the girl, for she gave a little, shaking laugh which strove to be contemptuous.

"'Penmarch shall mate with Pendragon,'" she said. "You cannot defy Fate."

"I shall not try," he said gently. "I also am of Penmarch. Set the lad free and let him go."

The witch-maid screamed. She leaped to her feet and caught Black Steven by the shoulders with her two hands, staring into his face.

"*You*, Steven!" she cried out shrilly. "*You? You?*"

"I take the lad's place," said he.

Her knees gave suddenly under her, and for a moment she hung upon him by her arms, her slim body shaking as she were in an ague fit. Then she dropped back and again crouched in her old place beside the glowing fire. Her red lips hung open and she stared, wide-eyed, scarcely yet comprehending.

"*Why?*" she said presently in a slow, gasping whisper. "*Why—why?*"

"For love's sake," he said, "but that need not concern you. Will you set the lad free and let him go?"

Staring yet, dully, like one dazed, she turned towards young Troilus. She stretched out an arm and said something in barbarous foreign words. The boy shivered and his head stirred. One after the other his arms dropped from his face and he raised his head. It was like an abrupt waking from deep slumber. For a moment he knelt on, looking about him. Then he saw his kinsman and sprang towards the man with a great cry.

"Steven, Steven!" he cried, and caught the elder man by the arm. He was shaking and frightened.

"What—is this, Steven?" he said. "What do you and I here?" For a moment he glanced to the waning fire and the slim maid who crouched there in her golden garment. Recollection seemed to come to him in a flash, and he covered his eyes, groaning.

"Let us go away!" he said after a little space. "Come, Steven, let us go! I have been mad."

Black Steven put his hands upon the boy's shoulders and looked down very sorrowfully into the mazed, affrighted young eyes.

"You must go, my lad," said he, "and I

stay. Do not question me and do not fret me with outcries or protestings. Go quickly!" Despite his words the boy cried out upon him in amazement and terror, with scornful refusals to go alone; but Steven spoke sharply, almost in anger, and the lad's long habit of unquestioning obedience stilled his tongue. He fell silent, staring up into his kinsman's stern face with wondering, bewildered eyes.

"Go you back to Penmarch," said the elder man, "and tell—the lady—Alianor—your mother, that Steven le Noir has held to his word—has done his utmost and will not return! Say to her that in this adventure he has had ever in mind his oath—to give body and soul to the succour and safeguarding of her son. That is all. Go you now, lad, and leave me here! Never forget what I have taught you, to live cleanly, to honour all women, to spare the weak, to fight to the utmost being in warfare, to die a good death. Go!"

Abruptly he turned to the witch-maid.

"What do you hold sacred," he demanded, "that you may take oath upon?"

"Fire," said she, still in her dull maze, "and earth, and the names of the great kings which were before Adam and sleep in the mountain of Kaf."

"Swear," said Black Steven, "that never through you nor your powers nor the powers of your seed shall any evil or spell or influence of any sort come to this lad, or to his house, or to his posterity!"

She took in one naked hand a glowing brand from the fire. And thereat young Troilus cried out with horror—with the other she tore a clod from the earth.

"By earth and fire," she said, "which are very sacred, and by the holy kings who sleep in the halls of Kaf——" She named them all, "Soliman Ben Daoud, Soliman Raad, Soliman Daki, Soliman Gian Ben Gian," and the rest —"I swear that no harm shall come to him or to his."

Steven le Noir kissed the boy on either cheek and put him away at arm's length. He took the shield from his back and hung it about Troilus's neck, and he gave into the boy's hand his sword.

"Never sully them, lad!" said he. "They have been borne with honour. And now go! Do not forget what I have told you. Go!"

The boy's eyes were still full of a great, uncomprehending wonder. It was as if he moved in a dream among half-formed things grave, terrible, and momentous. At his kinsman's bidding he turned and went without a word.

Half-way up the bank of the ravine he looked back once. Through the tall tree-trunks the fire gleamed yellow and red against an inky gloom. On opposite sides of it stood that slim, black-haired girl in her golden garment, and Steven le Noir, sometime of the Out Isles. The two stood still, and, so far as he could determine, silent, gazing gravely each into the other's eyes across the pulsing glow of the magic fire, and they did not stir the while he watched them. A little pang of fear stabbed at the lad's heart, he did not know why nor what he feared, but he turned and began to clamber more quickly up the precipitous bank.

At the top he found his horse waiting there patiently in the cool moonlight. He mounted and rode away south to Penmarch.

CONTRARINESS.

WHEN I am gay, the mournful songs I sing
Make list'ners pity, weep and steal away . . .
For ever harp I on a single string
When I am gay,

The lover dead, the rose of yesterday.
But in those shadow-times when joy takes wing,
When all my soul is sad, and skies are grey,
My voice is lilting praises of the spring
Glad with the joy of living rings my lay.
My heart would break to hear the songs I sing
When I am gay.

H. E. CALDWELL SMITH.



ELYSIUM!

EXAMINER: Now, can anyone tell me the name of a country where children wear no clothes, receive no education, and live in mud huts?

SMALL BOY: Yes, sir—Paradise!

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

COMING HOME FROM SCHOOL.

By H. C. O'Neill.

IT is not given to everyone to experience the actual thrills and terrors of stage fright. But something very much akin to this had fallen upon Dr. and Mrs. Leigh as they stood on the platform awaiting the train which was to bring their sixteen-year-old daughter back from her first term at a finishing school. Marjory had given her parents a foretaste of this many years before. They had been away from home for a few weeks and had felt a sudden sinking on their return, when subjected to the cold, unbiased, impartial stare of Marjory from the height of her eleven months. Each had privately registered a vow never to leave the child again. But now the child had left them, and never a suspicion had crossed their minds of aught that could worry, until the last few days. Now, however, they stood shoulder to shoulder waiting for the train—regretting, inwardly, that it should have been necessary for Marjory to be sent away to school. But he was a doctor—and the rest followed. What, precisely, "the rest" was neither could have said. But there lay its efficacy; for there is nothing like the urgency of the conclusion that is unstated and unanalysed.

Clearly enough, the child had gone; equally clearly she was to return to them in a few



THE WAY OF PEACE.

"PUT me off at the Marble Arch, conductor."
"I'd much rather you get quietly off yourself, sir."

moments. For some days great preparations had been in process. Not preparations of Marjory's room and personal accessories, though these were not overlooked. But the preparations that cost most thought were those of Mrs. Leigh—hats, blouses, skirts, frocks, costumes, etc.

Neither said a word to the other of the trouble that was oppressing them. What was it? Again, the pain and the insistence of the unknown.

On the morning of the day itself—the train was advertised to arrive at 2 p.m.—he, with a complete disregard of his practice, went to the Club, and victimised stray visitors by his views on all and sundry subjects. Every half-hour, sometimes oftener, he looked at his watch. Once a member asked him civilly on one of these occasions if he had to catch a train, and was surprised to see the doctor start and blush, as if caught in some disgraceful act. No, he had no train to catch. He was feeling that it must be time for lunch!

Far different was the order of his wife's morning, which was one of the busiest of her life. At half-past ten, after consulting the clock many times, she went to her room and commenced to examine—her wardrobe. She had always held that this ought to be done regularly by a careful housewife. Eleven o'clock found her tentatively trying on various frocks, costumes, combinations of blouses and skirts, hats, etc. By twelve o'clock she had tried as many different combinations as the laws of mathematics allow for such a number of skirts, blouses, hats, etc.

At one o'clock he came home to lunch and found her looking "a picture" in her latest and most expensive frock. "Hallo!" he said. "Going out?" Oh, heartless dissembler!

With a magnificent composure she asked what he meant.

"Well, you've got your best frock on, you know!"

Oh! No, she was not going out. She might be going, perhaps. But she thought it would be cooler. Would he come to lunch? He went.

After lunch he went to his dressing-room and put on his shabbiest riding-habit. When he had just finished, his wife knocked at the door—a vision in the new frock and latest hat. Their eyes met.

"You're not going to—in——?" she began indignantly; then suddenly in a normal voice: "Are you going riding?" she continued.

"What?" he said. "I *may* go riding. Are you ready? I suppose we'll have to go to meet Marjory soon. It's to-day she's coming, isn't it?"

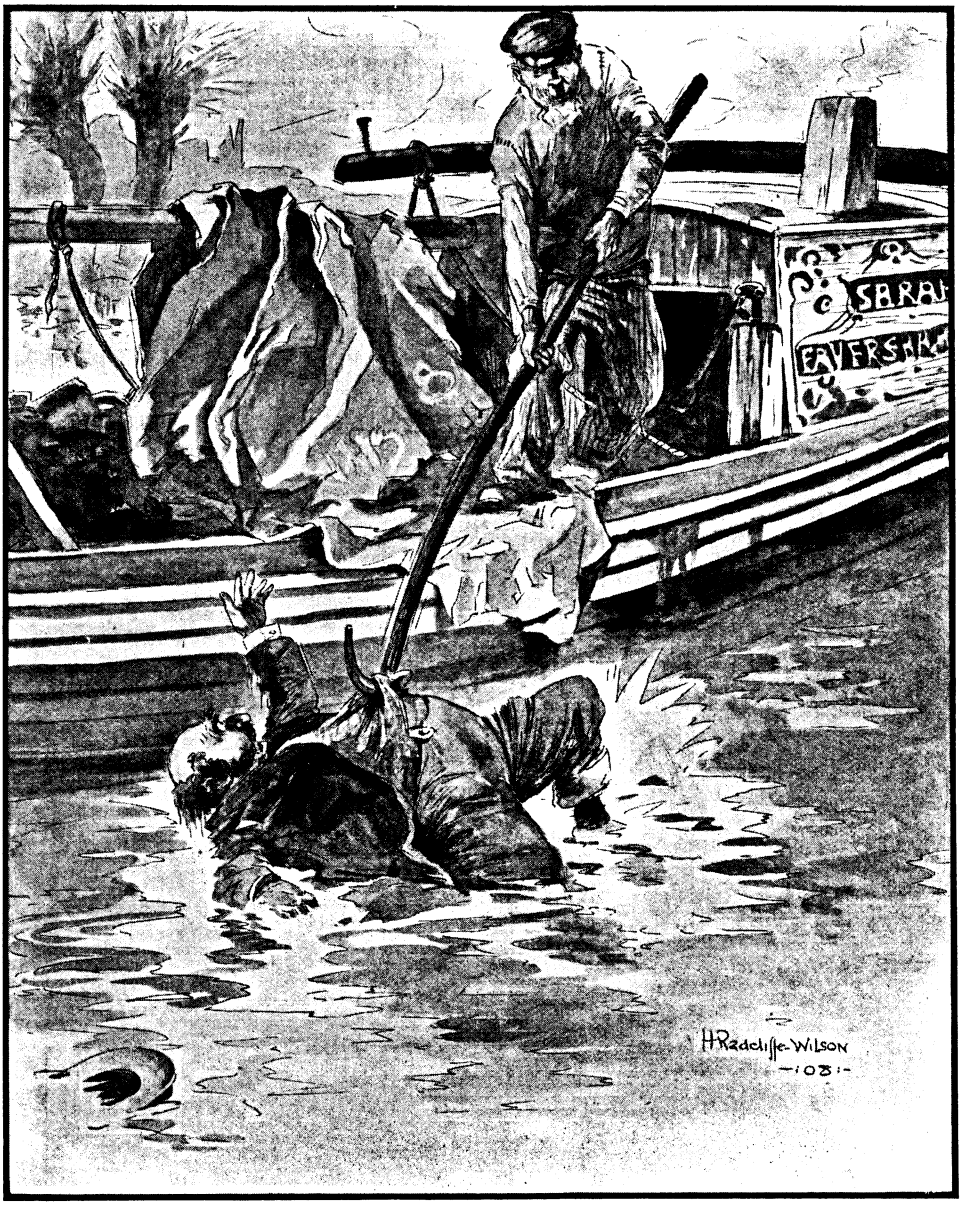
"Yes. I came to see if you were ready."

They set out, he carrying a disreputable riding-cane and swaggering fearlessly. She, too, had a look of utter composure, although perhaps she drew her veil over her chin rather often, and looked a little red.

So they came to the station, where they stood waiting for the train. Bells rang in the rural signal-box, a clang of a signal falling was heard, and, by and by, the sound of a train. A few porters appeared from station hiding-places, and the train was drawing up.



"WHAT are you doing, cook?"
"I'm plucking the chicken, dear."
"Do you undress them every night, then?"



THE FRUGAL HABIT.

"HERE, hi! Steady on there; I've dropped sixpence!'

He was now looking attentively away from the train towards the newspaper placards, with a look in his eyes such as the Light Brigade heroes must have had on meeting the enemy, on their ever-memorable charge. *She* had nearly pulled a hole in her veil and was still pulling, and her eyes had a look of fright which no effort of composure could banish.

A trim young lady, dressed in the height of fashion, her hair neatly coiled *up* (it had been *down* when she left home) on her head, which was surmounted by a mushroom hat, stepped from the train. A few quick steps, and "How are you, mother?" she said, as she flung her arms round her neck. Tears in her mother's eyes? Impossible! Well, perhaps it was the sunlight. A greeting with her father followed—on Marjory's side affectionate, on his nonchalant—and they were moving from the station. The ordeal was over.

A LADY in making a purchase at a shop one evening dropped a five-shilling piece into a crack in the floor. The next morning she called for her money. Leaning over the counter, the shopkeeper asked, in a confidential whisper, if she was sure that it was five shillings she had lost.

"Yes, a five-shilling piece."

"Well, it is very strange, but I give you my word of honour, lady, we only found four shillings and sevenpence."

THE NEW COOK (after a long series of questions): Might I ask, ma'am, where you go in the summer?

THE MISTRESS: It hasn't been decided yet, but you might let us know later what part of the country you prefer.

BAKER: People who have been near drowning say that in an instant all the events of their past lives are presented to their mental vision.

BARKER: I don't believe it.

BAKER: Why not?

BARKER: If it were true, they wouldn't allow themselves to be rescued.

TINTED TARRADIDDLES.

(*The Isis* lately recommended that the colour metaphor should be introduced in the matter of lying, *green* lies to represent misstatements caused by jealousy, and *purple* lies those gorgeous inaccuracies told for their very picturesqueness.)

He vowed—his warmth was injudicious—
Her rival's curls were quite delicious.
"Yes, quite, and who would guess," she said,
"They grew on someone else's head?"

Abashed, disgusted, and astonished,
All aids to Nature he admonished.
Her lie was *green* as green could be,
But, for that matter, so was he.

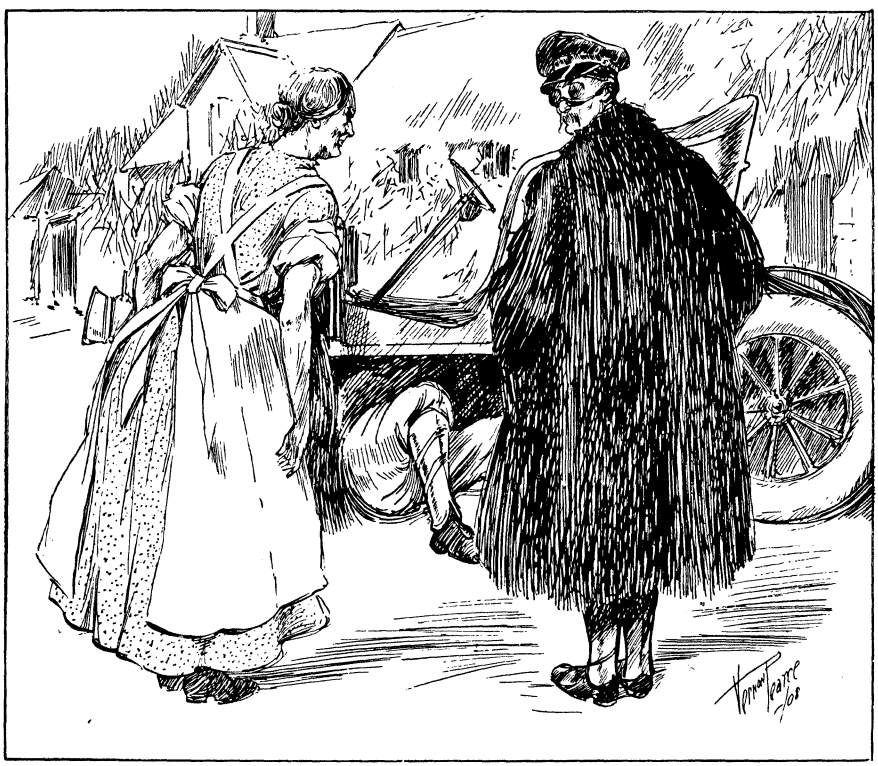
When, later on, his ardour moved him
To ask the fibster if she loved him,
To tantalise him in reply,
She answered "No!"—a *purple* lie.

He did not recognise the colour
And left her, to her life-long dolour.
Alas! too late the maid divined
To quibble he was colour-blind.

Jessie Pope

VISITOR: How old are you, Tommy?

THE MODERN BOY: Does the subject really interest you, madam, or do you introduce it merely as a theme for polite conversation?



RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION.

INDIGNANT COTTAGER (to motorist who has broken down in a remote village): Whoi doan 'e help the poor lad out, after running him over, instead of standing there like a fule?



"THE FOOLISH VIRGINS." BY FRANK DICKSEE, R.A.

"Too late! Too late! Ye cannot enter now."

From the original in the Leicester Art Gallery, reproduced by permission of the Committee from a photograph by F. Wetherman & Co., Enfield.



"CHECKMATE." BY FRED ROE.

MORE PICTURES BY MODERN ARTISTS.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

WITH a view to representing as fully as possible the talents of the artists considered in the articles which we are issuing month by month, we have in sundry cases secured permission to reproduce more of their work than the capacity of a single number allows. We therefore present the overflow collectively in this final number of our year, assured that, by the making of these painters unconscious collaborators for the purposes of a single article, the distinctive talent of none suffers eclipse. Like many an aftermath, our sheaf is as good, in the case of each, as were the first-fruits of the harvest. The subjects of the pictures themselves range over a large field, for the intellectual activity of painters is immense; but, just as the historian, with absolutely truthful intentions, "amid the multitude of facts presented to him must needs select, and in selecting, assert something of his own humour, something that comes not of the world without, but of a vision within," so does the artist, moulding his material to his taste, reveal the theme that interests him most. Not only do common things become, as it were, distinguished when in paint, but by its use the invisible is brought into play, and that which the long dead generation saw is re-enacted. Thus do painters refill, with the honey of their talents, the empty cells of the human hive.

. . . we're made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times, nor cared to see,
And so they are better, painted—better to us,
Which is the same thing.

Much catholicity of taste marks our overflow of pictures this year. Thus the late Paul Falconer Poole, whose work was not included in our article on the Art Gallery of Leicester, Mr. Ernest Crofts, and Mr. Fred

Roe, each shows an immense and vivid interest in that subject which we loosely label History, and, between them, they box the compass of actualities for inspiration. Mr. Bernard Gribble finds an epic poem to lie within the masts of ships; Mr. Perugini has sought his inspiration in the classics. Mr. Walter Langley tells of the genuine strain of poetry underlying the lives of those who work for their daily bread; and Mrs. Stanhope Forbes modifies actuality with imagination.

inclined, like the "geographers on pathless downs," to put "elephants for want of towns."

"The silence of these infinite spaces frighten me," wrote Pascal, contemplating the heavens at night, and had not men, by aid of an historic sense, been able to attach themselves to past generations and show us that it is possible to estimate the "intellectual creations of to-day in connection with the ages from which they have proceeded," we, too, should have fear of the infinite spaces of Time.

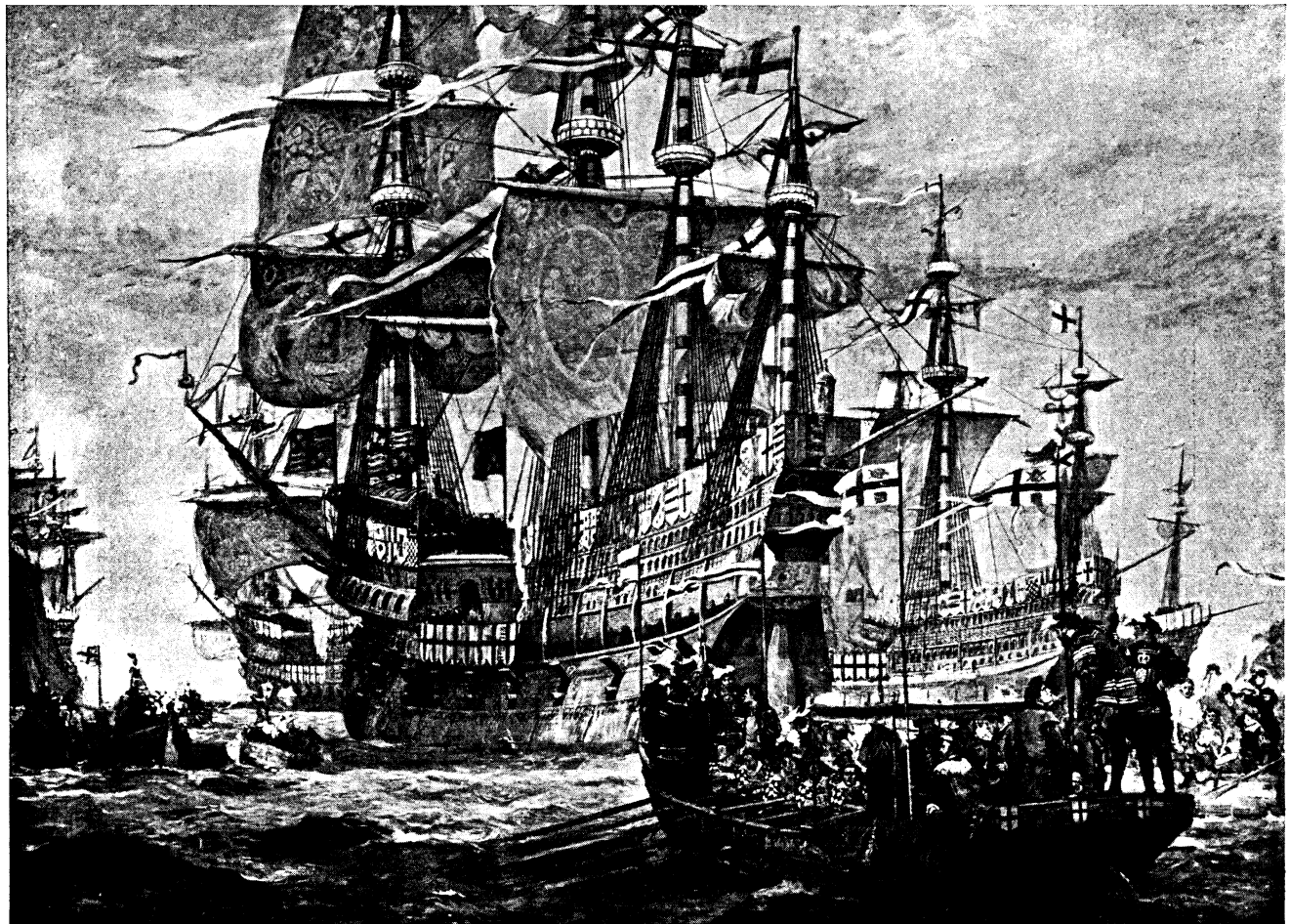


"THE MOTHER OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR—ARLÉTE, A PEASANT GIRL OF FALAISE, IN NORMANDY, DISCOVERED BY DUKE ROBERT LE DIABLE." BY PAUL FALCONER POOLE, R.A.

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It is pleasant to read our history in colour; but historical painting, "like all art which is in any way imitative or reproductive of fact," is the transcript not of mere fact, but of fact in its infinite variety as modified by human preference for one over all others of its various forms. Always ingenious and suggestive is the painter who walks the by-ways of time with the purpose of reconstructing old scenes for our benefit, and places before us incidents which, without his aid, we might possibly discredit, since we are

Paul Falconer Poole, R.A., a much esteemed artist of the Victorian era, who exhibited from 1830 till the year of his death, 1879, painted a picture which he entitled, "Arléte, a peasant girl of Falaise, in Normandy, discovered by Duke Robert le Diable." Called the Devil by the people, this Robert, who usurped the ducal crown of Normandy by poisoning his brother, Richard III., and his chief barons at a feast in 1028, was known as "Robert the Magnificent" by his nobles—whether from his crimes or from



"THE GREAT HARRY." BY BERNARD GRIBBLE.

his luxurious ways is left to the imagination. Burton, of melancholy memory, asserts, and quotes Havard as his authority, that Arlète was dancing on a green when Robert first saw her, but we have for so long accepted this tanner's daughter as engaged in the homely occupation of laundry when she caught the fancy of the Duke, that it needs but the legend to be written in line and surface for us to dismiss both Burton and his authority as inaccurate.

Yet had the painters who chose as theme the compulsory courtship of this mother of William the Conqueror by Duke Robert represented the scene of their first meeting as occurring at some gala, the appeal to the eyes, which they would have made, would have effaced the written description of Duke Robert's meeting, for so alive are we to the coercion of pictorial art that we accept its verdict, line upon line, holding it to be as accurate of events as that design which the pencil follows on tracing-paper.

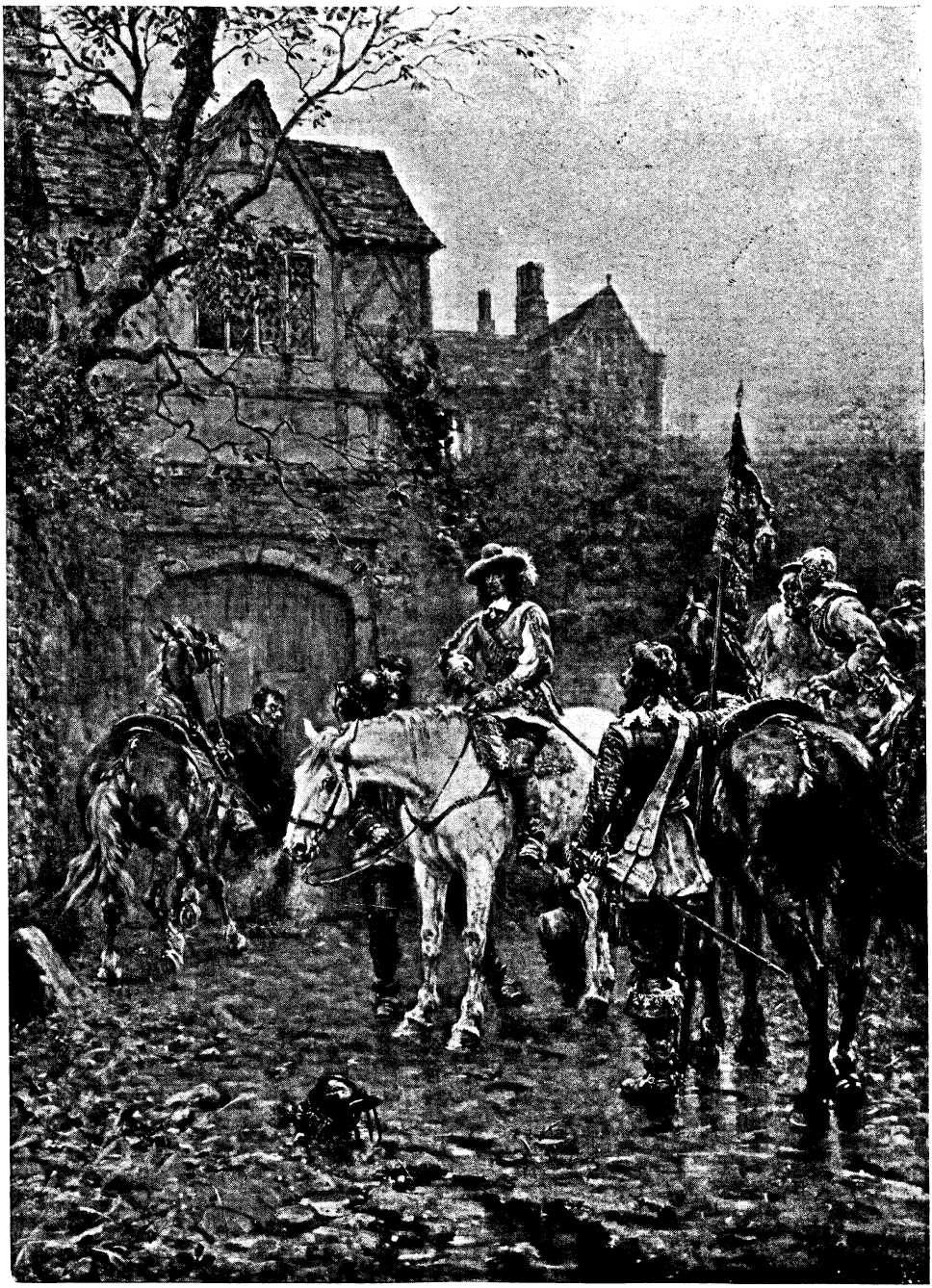
Mr. Bernard Gribble's vigorous picture, "The Great Harry," is of peculiar interest just now when our thoughts are turned on the question of the building of *Dreadnoughts*, at a cost of millions of money, for *The Great Harry* is said to have been the first vessel of the British Navy to deserve the name of a ship of war.



"MEN MUST WORK AND WOMEN MUST WEEP." BY W. LANGLEY.

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The beginnings of our Navy are traceable back to Alfred, the first English admiral, as he was the first English sovereign to command his own fleet in battle. With Edward the Confessor came the first fleet; with William the Conqueror came the first naval architecture; with John a close approach was made to a naval establishment; and the most desperate of sea-fights, that at Sluys, earned for Edward III. the title of "King of the Seas." It was to the Navy that Henry IV. and Henry V. owed the maintenance of national superiority; and we might do well to take to heart Hakluyt's exhortation, which appeared in a poem in the early days of Henry VI.'s reign, to keep command of the sea, "to do which is the worship and salvation to England and to all Englishmen."



"CHARLES II. AT WHITELADIES AFTER THE BATTLE OF WORCESTER."

By Ernest Crofts, R.A.



"WILD HYACINTHS." BY ELIZABETH STANHOPE FORBES.

It was the reign of Henry VII. which produced *The Great Harry*, stated to have cost £14,000. By some authority she is said to have been burned at Woolwich in 1533, by others it is stated that she was renamed *The Regent*, on the accession of Henry VIII.; whilst by others she is confounded with *Henry Grace de Dieu*, a ship of 1,500 tons, according to the Pepys Papers in Magdalene College, Cambridge. This ship, *The Great Harry* of Mr. Gribble's picture, was the first ship built with two decks; she carried fourteen guns on the lower deck, twelve on the main, eighteen on the quarter-deck and poop, and the same number on the lofty forecastle. These, with ten in her stern-ports, numbered seventy-two guns. Three hundred and forty-nine soldiers, three hundred and one mariners, and fifty gunners brought her regular establishment to seven hundred men. Thus *The Great Harry*, with her gallant freight and noble aspect, may



"DAPHNE." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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well be said to have been the pioneer of a time when the perils of the sea claimed all that was most heroic in England's most heroic age.

If we consider the four historical painters whose work we notice in this article in the chronology of their subjects, we must place Mr. Ernest Crofts' "Charles II. at Whiteladies after the Battle of Worcester" between Mr. Gribble's "The Great Harry" and Mr. Fred Roe's "Checkmate." Always ingenious and suggestive, Mr. Crofts is a military painter of very uncommon merit, and the episodes with which his brush deals are always explicit enough to make us turn to history with zest, as though to assure ourselves that we are perfectly conversant with the depicted scenes. Thus, looking at this

picture of Charles II. at Whiteladies, we tell ourselves that the flight from Worcester marked the lowest ebb of the monarch's fortunes, and, turning to Lingard, to Hallam, to Macaulay, to Knightley, to Aubrey, Burke, or Hume, whichever our favourite historian happens to be, remind ourselves how, till 1649, Charles, after the battle of Naseby, had spent his time either at Paris or at the Hague, interfering in the public affairs of his country only when he sent a signed *carte blanche* to Parliament to be filled up with any terms which it might dictate as the price of his father's life. But on the execution of Charles I. he immediately assumed the title of King. Led on by the entrancing theme, we turn page after page, to be reinformed how, the Scottish Government offering to place him on the throne by arms, he landed in Scotland eighteen months after the fatal 28th of January, to be crowned at Scone six months later; how he then joined Leslie's army at Stirling and, after the defeat of Dunbar, marched south in the hope of rousing the loyalty of England—a hope which failed with the defeat of the Royalist forces at Worcester.

Perhaps here we close our history book to think how closely we are allied to those times by linking generations, since only the other day we were told that, until quite recently, there lived in Worcester a very old man whose great-grandfather had related to him that he could recall how, as a child, he had seen the Roundhead troopers cut down the Royalists in the narrow streets. Then again we



"DORIS." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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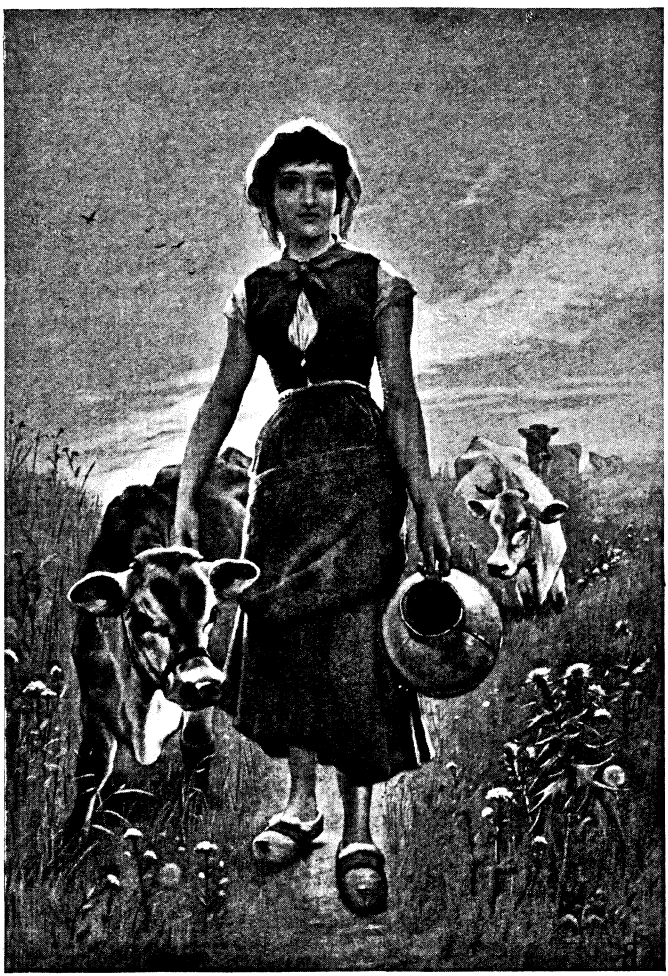
"THETIS." BY C. E. PERUGINI.

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open the book to read of the dangers and escapes of Charles, of his leaving Worcester with the Scottish Horse, and how, parting from them during the night with but a few attendants, he directed his course to Boscobel House, in Staffordshire, the seat of Mrs. Cotton, a Roman Catholic lady, who, not thinking him safe there, sent him on to Whiteladies, another of her houses. It is the arrival at Whiteladies that Mr. Crofts in his picture commemorates. Here all the King's followers took leave of him, and our historian tells us how, the next morning, in the threadbare clothes of a rustic, with stained face and hands and close-cropped curls, he, bill-hook in hand, took refuge in the woods in company with four labouring men on the estate. That night he made his way to the house of a Roman Catholic gentleman named Wolf, at Madeley, near the Severn. All the next day he lay concealed in a barn, while his host sent to examine the river to see if it was possible for him to cross into Wales; then, since all the bridges were guarded, he retraced his steps to Boscobel, to lie concealed the next day in the dense foliage of an oak tree, to regain the house only at night. The end of the story is outside the limits of Mr. Crofts' picture. On the second day of the King's sojourn at Boscobel he received a message from Lord Wilmot to meet him at Moseley, at the house of Mr. Whitegrave, also a recusant. As the King's feet had been cut and blistered by the walk to and from Madeley, he rode a horse belonging to one of the labouring men who had previously accompanied him

into the wood, and, with these brothers still attending him, reached Lord Wilmot, with whom a new plan of escape was devised which was safely carried through, thanks to the King's own great coolness and address, and the fidelity of those in whom he confided.

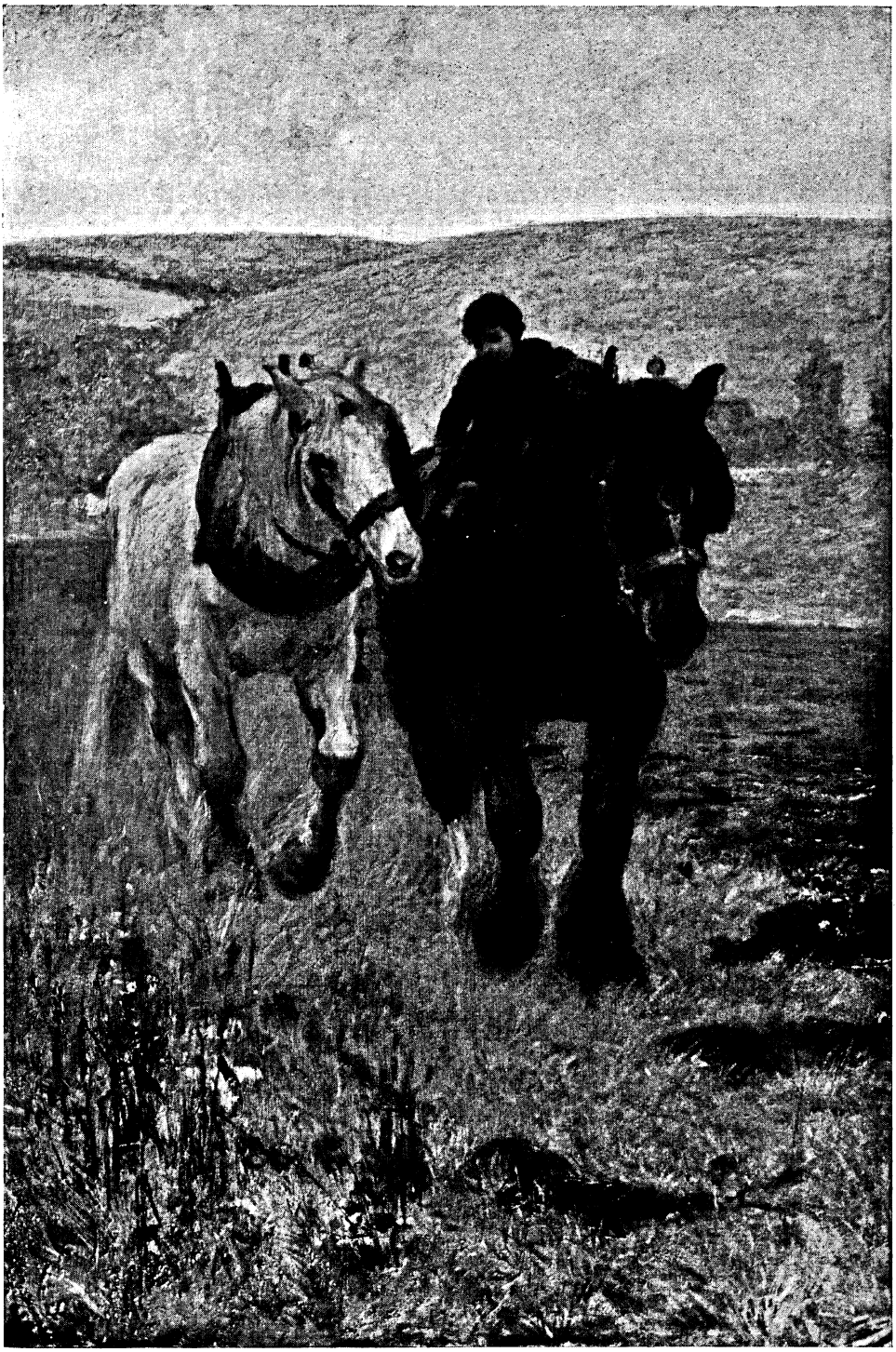
Mr. Fred Roe's picture, "Checkmate," takes us on into the reign of George III. This artist, too, has a vigorous literary instinct and a special taste for those times when both women and men practised the cult of elegance, when the influence of woman was facetiously acclaimed, and the rigid and intense personality of strong men was foppishly enveloped in laces and in 'broideries; when to enter into a drawing-room was a fine art, and a game of chess the dissipation of the forenoon. Mr. Roe's interest in and knowledge of the period is unimpeachable, and all his pictures show sincerity both of observation and of expression.



"DAUGHTERS OF A CHANNEL ISLAND." BY EDWIN DOUGLAS.

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We have so recently dealt with the art of Mr. Charles E. Perugini that, in considering his pictures "Daphne," "Doris," and "Thetis," we but pause to reflect that whereas romantic art finds its parallel in the impetuosity of youth, nothing being too extravagant, too usual, too emotional, too fantastic, too passionate, too pathetic, too dramatic in theme for its exponents, classic art finds its parallel in its care of form, its unaccentuated attention to deportment. Its essentials are enthroned with sobriety, amongst elegance, reticence, and dignity. The classic makes no endeavour to grasp what lies beyond its sensible embodiment, the ideal of which is expressed preeminently in sculpture, because there is excluded, by the limitation of the material used, any development of situation. It is opposed in fact to the episodic; "all that is accidental, all that distracts the simple effect upon us of the supreme types of humanity, all traces in it of the commonplaces of the world it gradually purges away." Classic art is above all other arts subject to the law of limitation. It has nothing to do with drama, morals, chivalry, and great emotions are in it as non-existent as is the hurry of life, for the actions the classic painter elects to represent are simple ones without significance, such as a game of cup and ball, or the binding on of a sandal, or the lazy enjoyment of a noonday hour. Classic art deals almost exclusively with



"A LORD OF CREATION." BY ROWLAND WHEELWRIGHT.

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"THROUGH THE DEEP DRIFT." BY ARCHIBALD THORBURN.

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youth, where the moulding of the bodily organs is still as if suspended between growth and completion, indicated but not emphasised.

Daphne was the daughter of the river-god Pencius, whose lover, Leucippus, pursuing her, was killed at the instigation of Apollo, who, in turn, taking up the chase, transformed her, at her own entreaty, into a bay tree; Doris was the daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, whose fifty daughters were called the Nereides, of whom Thetis was the chief. But we need not identify Mr. Perugini's graceful women more closely than the painter may have intended when selecting names for his types of classical beauty.



"THE VICTORIA FALLS VIEWED FROM THE RAIN FOREST." BY E. H. HOLDER.



"BIRDS OF ILL OMEN." BY EDWIN DOUGLAS.

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To the classic conceptions of Mr. Perugini we affix "The Wild Hyacinth" of Mrs. Stanhope Forbes; but, while Mr. Perugini is the exponent of a form of art that lies within severe limitations, Mrs. Stanhope Forbes confers on the branch of the same art, to which in this picture she applies herself, the more elastic and living influence of imagination; and her work is, in this case, the link by means of which we connect the austerity of that of ancient Greece with the modern realism of Mr. Rowland Wheelwright or Mr. Edwin Douglas as applied to scenes from animal life.

"A Lord of Creation," by Mr. Rowland Wheelwright, and "Daughters of a Channel Island," by Mr. Edwin Douglas, are both instances of that union of animal and human life with which the common, work-a-day country-world abounds, but Mr. Walter Langley's "Men Must Work and Women Must Weep," although it deals with the same hard life of toil, finds its peculiar inspiration, as is usually the case with this, one of the cleverest of Newlyn men, in the poignant suffering which the wives and mothers of fishermen undergo.

"Birds of Ill Omen," by Mr. Edwin Douglas, and Mr. Archibald Thorburn's "Through the Deep Drift" illustrate desolating conditions of Nature, and grapple successfully with the problem of atmospheric environment, as does also Mr. E. H. Holder's treatment of the less sombre scene of "The Victoria Falls Viewed from the Rain Forest," with which we bring our present series of pictures to an end.

A PLACE OF DREAMS.

IN a dear land, in a dim land,
By well-remembered streams,
Bare trees in moorland hollows stand
Where a lost sunset gleams:
There joy and memory hand-in-hand
Wander: its flowers are dreams.

There often, waking or asleep
The lingering spirit strays,
There where the wild winds sigh and sweep
Along the wintry ways,
And footfalls rustle in the deep
Dead drift of yesterdays.

C. FOX SMITH.

INITIATION.

By AUSTIN HARRISON.

AS the sleigh glided into the long, palatial avenue which lines the left bank of the Neva, the driver pulled up his piebald, Finnish pony with a jerk, threw down the reins, and turned round abruptly on his seat.

"It's like blood, little lady, by the Holy Tsar!" he said, casting up his black, unkempt beard towards the sky, which glowed above and over the whole city in streams of ruby fire. The man was obviously impressed. He sat staring at the heavens with his hands folded upon his lap, while small icicles, bobbing up and down like tinsel tassels, clung to his bearded face, which sparkled in the freezing air as with the spray of gold dust.

The great bridge before them, the deep sheet of rubbled ice which cloaked the broad, winding stream lay bathed in soft, red light, and the white snow on street and water shone pink in exquisite suffusion. On the other side of the river, the massive fortress of St. Peter and Paul stood against the red sunset glow in red and purple flush, gaunt and sinister, its tall, minaretted tower glistening like blood-stained steel towards the red fire of the heavens. A deep, purple shadow clung about its base, as were it testimony to its fetid dungeons. But all else was red—the face of the city, the palace and the stately dome of the cathedral, the long woods tapering up to the extreme point of the "islands," the stacks of factories in the Viborg district, and the whole amplitude above—a red of wonderful, sublime intensity, soft and infinitely beautiful.

Not until the red had melted into a purple blue did the driver look from the heavens, or give the slightest intention to move on. Then, when the other sleighs and carriages began to disperse, he turned round abruptly again.

"Like blood, by the Holy Tsar!" he said sententiously, biting an icicle from his moustache. He pulled off his rough, fur cap, crossed himself, caught up the reins, rattled the stock of his short whip vigorously against the seat, and drove on, muttering and laughing to himself.

After a while, when he had crossed the bridge and penetrated some way into the district known as the Vassilievsky Ostroff, he pulled up again suddenly.

The lady alighted. She walked steadily on for about ten minutes, turned down a small street to the right, looked round to see if she was observed, and, apparently satisfied, entered a small courtyard. Passing through an open door to the left, she mounted a dark flight of wooden stairs to the fourth storey. There was a bell at the door, but she did not ring it. She stood for a moment or two listening attentively, then, inserting a finger through the slit of the letter-box fastened to the door from the inside, she raised the flapper, letting it fall sharply twice in succession. She had to repeat this before there was any sign of response from within. At the second attempt a sound of shuffling footsteps came from the passage, stopped, and someone coughed. She immediately coughed in reply, and the door opened.

The woman passed in without uttering a word, while the door closed behind her silently.

"Good evening, Papa Notoffsky," she said to the old man who had let her in, when they stood in a little apartment, dimly lighted by a smelling paraffin lamp, which was used evidently as kitchen.

"How are you, little father? Is Miron in?"

The girl threw off her fur shuba, her hat, gloves, and snow-boots, and passed without another word into the adjoining room, closing the door behind her. It was more a box than a room, bare save for a tawdry ikon which hung on the walls awry. A lighted candle, riveted in its own grease upon the little wooden table, burned feebly, showing a few books, a newspaper, a pipe, and an English revolver. On the floor a man lay sleeping.

Sonia Ispravinka stood by the door hesitating. She was dressed very simply in black, and, though not beautiful, had an

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"The lady alighted. She walked steadily on."

appearance which unconsciously arrested attention. The face was pale, looking all the paler from the redness of the thin, red lips—very sensitive, intense, even tragic in its setting of wavy, brown hair, which she wore drawn back across the ears—and deep-set, pensive eyes, luminous with the softness of velvet.

She approached the man and looked down with a yearning tenderness upon his face. He was breathing slowly in deep sleep. The bright red shirt was open, laying bare a chest broad as a giant's, upon which a hand which could have felled an ox rested peacefully. The throat was superb, with the lines of a Greek statue. Masses of fair, curling hair, worn long in the manner of the Russian workman, clustered about the face and neck, imparting a singular youthfulness, almost gentleness, to the

massive face, clear and rosy as a girl's, upon the upper lip of which a young down grew soft as if in modesty. The nose was very thick, square, sensual. A magnificent strength, the virility of the soil, lay stamped all over the man, beautiful as a young god.

"Miron, Miron!" the girl said, peering down into his face. "Miron! Wake up! Wake up!"

The eyes opened, big, laughing, young, blue eyes, and stared upon her. But only for a second. Then the great arms folded themselves about the girl's frail form.

"Well, little Sonia, what is it?" he said, in his musical, gentle way, while her eyes drank in his young strength.

She looked at him with an intense love flowing from her velvet eyes—a look of pain and haunting anguish. She did not speak at once; she seemed to be penetrating into the man's soul.

"Listen, Miron," she said at length, very softly and slowly. "They're going to take Sakoff, the great writer, to-night. There may be others, too. You must go and find Stroffski at once and warn him. He must know about it immediately. That is why I have come."

She never took her eyes from him. Her upturned face was absolutely motionless, beautiful with a strange earnestness. In the deep, pensive eyes the luminancy of the fanatic burned with implacable lustre. Something of the fiend, something divine, seemed to possess her.

"I'd better go at once, I suppose," Miron remarked carelessly. "Stroffski is down with the strikers, isn't he?"

"Yes, Miron," the girl answered. "You'll find him at old Vaska's."

"Anything else?" he inquired, lighting a cigarette.

Sonia Ispravinka shook her head.

Miron Popylishko was ready to go now. He saw no use in temporising, and came towards her with outstretched hand. The girl took it, hung to it, pressing the great fist to her bosom. Then she nearly broke down.

"Miron, my darling," she said, with a strange calmness, "you are true to me and to the cause?"

"Have no fear, little one. Miron Popylishko was not born to be caught yet."

He kissed her slowly, tenderly, first on one eye, then on the other.

"Do you doubt me, little Sonia?" he said.

An older man might have read the anguish which lay, plain enough, in those soft, velvet eyes; but Miron, he was of the age of conquest, the age of wonderful and irresistible youth, which sees and knows not.

The girl dwelt upon his face, with one finger caressing his eyebrow.

"No, Miron," she said slowly, "I don't doubt. Now go."

A moment later Miron Popylishko was in the street.

He had a long walk before him—a good hour, he reckoned—so he swung along, his head thrown back, as was his custom, now whistling softly, now humming snatches of song, towards the factory quarter beyond the gates, where the men were out on strike. Save for one or two porters he had clouted open the heads of, his life had been wholly uneventful. His great asset was his pink face. All over him the moujik class lay written. In such a burly frame, behind those blue, laughing eyes, there could surely be no brain, no hungry, secret gall! This was a product of the soil, not of any economic, social conditions. Not a detective in St. Petersburg had ever even "noted" him.

Miron Popylishko strode rapidly along, and women glanced up archly into his laughing face, while men eyed him with an envious pride. He never looked at the policemen standing at the street corners, yet how he longed to seize them in his powerful arms and crush the life's blood out of them! He could have done it, too, easily enough, and the smile grew broader as he thought of it. Moreover, he was elated with the importance of his confidential mission. Very few people knew Stroffski even by name. He had only seen him himself once, one evening, speaking to Sonia Ispravinka in a little tea-shop where they were wont to meet. This Stroffski, why, he was as silent and mysterious as the grave! One never saw him. No one, so far as he was aware, knew where he lived. To be sent so with a message to Stroffski was an honour he appreciated. In all Petersburg, he thought, there was no man one kopeck's purchase happier.

There were some half-a-dozen Maxim guns posted in the open space fronting the gateway which led into the factory quarter, and a squad of mounted police and Cossacks lolled on benches and on rugs grouped about a large fire, the Cossacks apart from the others, as became men who owned their own horses and soil; and in the background, reflected picturesquely by the dancing flames, their

horses stood peacefully in horseshoe form, saddled and bridled for emergency.

The snow crunched under his feet as he sped down the long, straight road, well lighted at regular intervals; and under every lamp-post men, in knots of two and three—for not more than three were allowed to assemble together—stood smoking, chatting, and musing, with that air of vacancy and suspense peculiar to all strikers. A little further on he met a squad of Cossacks patrolling the street. They were superb fellows, astride their lissom, wiry, long-haired Russian horses, magnificently insolent, with their long, fair hair curling in, like a scimitar, about their ears, their raking seats and long moustaches bristling with a savage effrontery. But Miron Popylishko never even glanced up. Full well he knew and hated them.

"You've a good back for a lash," sang out a Cossack, his white teeth gleaming like a dog's under an enormously long and waving moustache.

"The fiends!" Miron muttered to himself, but not a muscle in the young giant's face quivered.

"The moujik's deaf," laughed the Cossack, turning round in his saddle to watch Miron's retreating form as he went his way, whistling quietly his soft Russian dance—a man no Cossack would have cared to meet singly in a field on a dark evening. In another second they had passed on.

The small door stood on the latch, and Miron passed in. He knew the way and walked slowly upstairs, entering a large room with wooden walls, warm with a pungent odour of steam, tobacco smoke, and humanity sweating—full of workmen seated at small, wooden tables, smoking and drinking tea and vodka. Old Vaska's drink-shop was much patronised by the men down there at the works, and now, during the strike, was the chief refuge and rendezvous for them all. The heat in the place was terrific, but Miron liked its cosy warmth, the smell and sight of the steam curling up from kettle and samovar and huge basins of soup. He strolled through the long room, scanning the faces of the men, some of whom were playing at cards, some with dominoes, and some with dice; but none of them took the slightest notice of him, nor did he notice how singularly taciturn these men were in reality, smiling, talking, to all appearances entirely calm and happy, as Russian workmen always do appear, yet on whose countenances a look of sullen care and dejection brooded, as if it were a mask drawn over their souls.

Miron did not have to search for long. In a corner at the far end of the room he saw the man he wanted, and, finding that there was a seat at his table, he ordered a vodka and sat down beside him. He was a very small, spare, wiry man, with about a week's growth of hair upon a sallow, pinched, flat-nosed face, quite insignificant, except perhaps for the eyes, which were amazingly quick and bright, very hard, piercing, and inscrutable. Miron felt he could have picked this little fellow up and pitched him out of window like a dead cat. But, for all that, he could not help looking at the hands, the long, thin, white fingers of which were soft, tapering off at the tips as a woman's, and seemed to be unceasingly feeling, probing, testing, like the tentacles of some strange sea monster he had seen in a tank one day at the Aquarium.

Stroffski—for it was he—made no remark, merely nodding a casual recognition. Looking at him closer, Miron came to the conclusion that he had been drinking. His jaw hung somewhat, his whole expression was vacant, sluggish; from time to time he lurched about on his chair. As there were two other men at the table, there was nothing to be done, of course. For about half an hour he sat so, drinking, smoking, and considering, every now and then glancing aside at Stroffski, who appeared, though, oddly enough, he was not actually drinking, to get more sluggish, sodden, and drunken every minute. Then, to his great relief, the two other men, who had scarcely even looked at him, got up and left the room.

Miron Popylishko edged his chair nearer to Stroffski, so as to be able to speak lower, nudging him with his foot under the table.

"Well, Miron Popylishko," Stroffski said quietly, but without looking at him, "what is it, friend?"

Miron was rather surprised at the clearness of the apparently intoxicated man's speech, and looked at him searchingly; but Stroffski was plainly drunk, his whole demeanour grotesque and impenetrable.

He lit a cigarette.

"I've got a message for you," he said. Stroffski, however, continued staring vacantly, while the long, white fingers played restlessly upon the table.

Seeing that Stroffski made no attempt to speak or stir, Miron slowly unburdened himself. Speaking as lowly as he could, he told him why he had come; how that Sakoff was to be arrested, that Sonia Ispravinka had

sent him so that perhaps he might be able to warn some of the others in time. As he spoke, Stroffski's jaw seemed to sink lower and lower. The man looked inanimate but for the hands, which moved fitfully about, but whether he was listening, whether he understood or not, Miron could not tell. When he had delivered himself of his message, he sat still for quite five minutes, frankly disgusted at this anti-climax to his mission; then suddenly Stroffski looked round for the first time. There was no doubt about it—Stroffski was drunk. The sallow, unshaven face had a stupid, sullen leer, the lower lip protruded brutally.

"Do you understand?" Miron asked rather gruffly.

With astonishing rapidity, the keen, bright eyes of the drunken man flashed into his.

"Yes, little brother," he blurted out, "I understand."

After a pause, Miron spoke again.

"Shall I see you home, Stroffski?" he said, wondering what he should say next. Stroffski poured himself out a glass of vodka and emptied it at a gulp.

"Not necessary, friend," he replied, and relapsed into his old attitude, his long, white fingers drumming upon the table.

Miron had still some more of the white spirit in his decanter. He had performed his task. He had a long walk back into the town, so he decided to sit on for a while, if only to look after Stroffski.

Presently Stroffski spoke again.

"Miron Popylishko," he began, speaking with remarkable clearness.

"We've decided to kill him," he said, in an off-hand way, then he fell back on his chair into his former lurching posture. Miron felt more and more puzzled. He understood the reference to "him," but what perplexed him was Stroffski. Now he seemed to be drunk, now he spoke as a man very wide awake indeed. He felt it to be distinctly strange that Stroffski, this silent, secret man of mystery and terror, whose nod had been known to bring about the death of men a thousand miles away, should reveal such a scheme in this wanton, drunken fashion. It was absurd and disgusting. Miron began to be exceedingly vexed with the whole business.

While he was thinking, Stroffski turned on him again.

"That's a secret, you know," he remarked casually.

"I think I'm drunk," he said, and fell back heavily on his chair. It was evidently no use talking any more. Miron finished his vodka, and was preparing to pay, when a man sat down on the empty chair beside him.

"Good evening, brother," he observed in a pleasant way. "From these parts?"

Miron Popylishko, thoroughly on his mettle, turned round and had a good look at him.

The man had a merry, insinuating manner, and a mouth which twisted in and about like rubber. His eyes sparkled rather furtively, Miron thought. He was dressed with somewhat more care than the other men. He immediately ordered another half-litre of vodka, and began to chat with a volubility which struck Miron as suspicious.

"Come down for a job?" he said facetiously.

"Just strolled in to have a look," retorted Miron, in his best moujik accent; and the man was so garrulous and amusing that Miron thought he would stay on for a bit.

He told some excellent stories, too, laughing immoderately at his own jokes, and growing more and more confidential. Presently he began to talk about the strike. He was a foreman himself, he explained, and rather sympathised with the men. "Poor devils, they don't quite know what they want, but they might as well get something. Don't you think so, brother?" he said. "Between you and me, there's a lot, I think, they ought to get." He appeared to be impressed with this remark, and for quite a minute kept silence. Then he leaned insinuatingly towards Miron.

"Who's this?" he inquired, winking and jerking his head towards the drunken form of Stroffski, who all this while had never even looked up.

"Don't know," Miron answered casually. "One of the men here, I expect."

"Pal of yours?" the man insisted.

Miron shook his head.

"Doesn't look like a workman, does he?" the man continued, eyeing Stroffski with critical acumen. "Look at his hands. Like a woman's, aren't they?"

"Perhaps he's a foreman, too," Miron answered, which caused the man to look sharply in his direction again. He stared at Miron with intentional admiration, always smiling, while his merry eyes twinkled like fireflies.

"You're on the side of the people, I suppose," the man said next, craning across to Miron. "We're all Socialists now, aren't we? We're all going to free ourselves now, aren't we?

"Ever thought of our literature?" he observed suddenly. "I've got some interesting papers in my pocket. Perhaps you would care to see them." He almost ceased smiling as he said this, and looked up at the ceiling impressively.

"Can't read," Miron answered stolidly. Then he looked at Stroffski, who sat as before, staring drunkenly at his hands. The man was obviously a spy. Miron saw that plainly enough. He did not like the idea of this fellow sitting so close to Stroffski, who was drunk, and might give himself away any moment. He made up his mind to "play the goose," and see the thing through.

"That's a pity, friend," the man observed, looking questioningly at Miron, "but it has its uses, too. Your health!"

He drank his vodka down at a gulp, while Miron emptied his glass. Then he ordered another half-litre. Stroffski seemed by this time to have fallen asleep. His chin lay almost on his chest. The two men looked at him curiously, Miron wondering how really drunk he was.

The man seemed to notice this. Placing an elbow on the table, he rubbed his nose meditatively with a dirty finger, and remarked, with a rather obvious attempt at absent-mindedness—

"I hear 'he's' going to Moscow next week." But Miron never flinched; his face had an absolutely stupid, inexpressive stare. Outwardly he appeared hardly to understand. But he felt instinctively that this was a matter of very serious import, both to Stroffski and to the cause. Only a moment ago Stroffski had been telling him about this very matter, and here was this man who seemed to have knowledge of it—a spy, for certain, sitting at the same table next him. He began to hate Stroffski for his drunken folly. For the first time in his life, Miron Popylishko felt powerless and uncomfortable.

"They say they're going to do for 'him' there," the man continued, with his exasperating smile and wink. "It's about time, don't you think?" he added confidentially.

Miron emptied another glass. Suddenly, to his surprise, Stroffski gave a loud hiccup.

"Moscow!" he said, with a drunken leer. "What about Moscow?"

The man tipped Miron a wink. Placing a hand on Stroffski's sleeve, he whispered across the table: "They say 'he's' going to Moscow next week. Have you heard?"

Stroffski looked up for the first time. He looked first at Miron, then at the smiling face before him, with an expression that was unmistakable. He seized his glass of vodka and began to drink, pouring half of it down his chin and coat. Then he sat back, holding the empty glass on his knee, and grinned stupidly.

He leered and grinned, fell back on his seat with his chin sunk on his chest, and seemed to fall asleep again.

The man laughed and watched him.

"He won't want any more drink to-day, anyhow," said the man.

They both stared at Stroffski, who looked as if he might fall off his chair now at any moment, then they looked at each other.

"Brother," said the man, "it isn't late. Suppose we go out for a stroll where it's quiet, eh? We could talk then."

"Can't we talk here, friend?" Miron said clownishly, though he was astonished at the question.

"No, not comfortably, friend," the man answered, "not before this drunken beast," he added, with a slight movement of the head towards Stroffski.

"You see, it's initiation you want—initiation, that's all. And I want to show you these papers."

"What's that?" Miron inquired.

"Initiation? Oh, just the sense and use of things. It's the use you need, friend. You've got the sense right enough. But that's just it. You're wasted because you don't know how to make use of it. Look here. You come out with me, and I'll tell you about it."

Miron began to think. What could the man be driving at?

"You're not afraid of me, are you?" said the man, twisting his upper lip provokingly. "Why, you're twice my size, little brother, if it comes to that."

Miron hesitated. The man had some object in view, that was clear. Perhaps it was as well for him to find it out. It would be a good thing, anyhow, to get the spy away from Stroffski.

"*Nichevó*, I'm not afraid!" he said quietly.

"*Harascho*, let's go, then! No, no, I'll pay." Seeing that the man pressed the matter, Miron let him settle the account. As he rose, he took a side glance at Stroffski, but the drunken form gave no sign of consciousness. Just before he left the room, he glanced back again. Stroffski had not budged. The chin sunk on his chest, he sat in sodden sleep, his long, white, tapering fingers hanging listlessly by the chair—a shrunken, unwashed, drunken spectacle.



"Presently he began to talk about the strike."

Miron Popylishko felt relieved when the cold night air singed his face like a flame.

Outside, the man chatted gaily on, and Miron enjoyed the brisk walk in the darkness through a number of side streets, round the high wall of a factory, down a narrow lane leading to the open fields, and then across them for yet another five minutes, until they came to a rude shed used in summer for shearing sheep.

It was quite dark, save for the glim reflection off the white snow at their feet, from which, as they stood listening by the shed, a scratching ripple, not unlike the faint rustle of a woman's skirt, came up to them; otherwise the night was absolutely still. In the distance, above the city, a dull redness hung in the black sky, and nearer to them the blazing fire of the Cossacks' bivouac by the gateway sent up a soft shaft of light. The man advanced to the shed, struck a match, peered cautiously in through the open door, turned round, beckoning with his hand to Miron, and passed in. Miron was not afraid, but his fists were clenched, ready for any ambush, as he bent his head to pass under the low door. As he entered, the man struck another match, and presently they sat down together on the trough which ran along the interior of the shed.

"We can talk here in safety," the man said. "I like you. You're a useful man,

you are. I'm fly enough, too. We might understand each other—don't you think so?"

Miron said he thought he did understand him; that for his part there really was nothing to be understood, that perhaps as he could read and was plainly so much better educated, he would explain—which was the best way for a man to understand anything.

His apparent sincerity reassured the man, who proceeded to make a great fuss with his papers, pulling them out of his pocket, spreading them on his knee, folding, unfolding, rustling, and displaying them—rather foolishly, Miron thought, as no one could see them in the darkness, and talking volubly without a break.

"Look here," he said, while Miron was pretending to think over one of his remarks, "why don't you join us?"

Miron professed not to understand.

"You see, brother, it's like this," the man resumed, speaking almost mouth to mouth. "A man like you ought to do something for the people." Then he entered into a long explanation about Socialism and Anarchism, and the great movement which men called the Revolution, destined—he knew it!—to emancipate the Russian proletariat. As the man continued, Miron simulated a growing interest. He slapped his knee. "I see—I see! Yes—yes! that sounds right enough," he kept on saying. At last he pretended to be convinced.

"You're right, brother," he said simply. "I think I'll join you, if you tell me what to do."

The man expressed his pleasure at this announcement by slapping Miron two or three times vigorously on the back. He struck a match and looked searchingly into Miron's face, but the moujik smile there was irresistible. The man appeared satisfied with his inspection, and smiled in turn. Then, lowering his voice, he grew very earnest and confidential.

There was a great plot he had heard of, and a big reward would be forthcoming for any reliable information. Miron began to listen with renewed keenness.

"That drunken fellow—Stroffski, I think his name is," the man went on, in an offhand fashion—"he knows something about it," he said, suddenly striking another light, evidently with the object of observing Miron's expression.

But Miron looked as blank as the snow glimmering faintly on the fields.

"Is Stroffski a revolutionary, then?" he said innocently.

The match went out and the man went on.

"Between you and me, friend, I believe Stroffski is the man singled out for the business. He's got some job on hand, I feel sure. But that's it, you see. He doesn't talk to me; now, he would to you. Why don't you find out?"

"Why should I, comrade?" Miron replied boldly.

The man put up a little, insinuating laugh.

"Ha, ha! You will excuse my laughing, friend, won't you? But that's just it—initiation, that's what you want. It's all a matter of initiation. You don't understand the uses of things. Well, I'll tell you. Listen here, friend."

Suddenly the man stopped, placed a hand on Miron's sleeve, and held his breath.

"Hush!" he whispered. "I thought I heard a noise."

Miron thought he had, too. The two men sat, clutching each other by the hand, holding their breath. Presently the man rose, walked quickly on tiptoe to the door, and peered out. But there was nothing to be seen. It was too dark to see more than a couple of yards away. An absolute stillness reigned. Only the white mat of snow outside broke the deep blackness of the night. The man looked anxiously up and down, listened with one hand to his ear, and presently returned. Miron had not moved. He was sitting as before, on the trough, smiling and complacent.

"I thought I heard a man's tread," said the man in rather a hollow tone. "Did you hear anything, friend?"

"No," Miron answered stolidly, but for all that he felt convinced that he had heard something move, and he was determined now more than ever to see the thing through.

"Go on, comrade," he said, seeing that the man still listened as if hesitating to speak. "You were talking about—initiation."

"Ah! Yes, so I was, about Stroffski. See here. It's the uses of things you've got to learn. Now, this Stroffski, as I was saying, he's got some big job on. He took a ticket for Moscow the other day, I know that. Now, perhaps you'll say what's in that?"

"Can't say I do see much in it," retorted Miron.

"I thought so," the man said. "Nor would I if I did not know who was going there next week as well. Put two and two together, friend, and you get the sense of the matter. Now, I'll explain to you where your initiation comes in."

He paused again, listened attentively, and resumed.

"There's a lot of money to be touched on this." He paused again and put his hand lightly on Miron's massive fist.

"Anyone who finds out what Stroffski is up to could earn enough to settle down and be comfortable for life," he said very deliberately. "Do you follow me?"

"But suppose," Miron pursued argumentatively—"suppose you are wrong, and Stroffski is merely the drunkard he seems to be?"

"I don't suppose—I know," the man said drily.

"You know, friend! How do you know?" Miron let this escape with an eagerness he could not conceal.

"Because——" began the man. "Curse it, friend! Did you hear? I thought I heard that noise again," he uttered suddenly, in a frightened whisper.

Once more the two men listened attentively; they held their breath, sitting rigid and motionless on the trough, every nerve and instinct strained to the full. The man rose softly and peered out into the open. But there was no sound to be heard. The faint bark of a dog came to them from the distance. The night seemed darker, stiller than before.

"It's the wind on the snow," Miron whispered, beginning to feel more uneasy than he could ever remember. "There can't be anyone here."

"Curse it!" said the man. "We must get away from this. I don't feel safe here any longer. Let's go out into the open."

"Don't be a fool, brother," Miron said, putting his great hand on the man's arm. "Go on and finish."

"Yes, all right," said the man. "If anyone comes in here, I'll shoot him!" he said in a loud voice. Then he continued softly: "Well, as I was saying, I do know about Stroffski, because it's my business to know. Have you got it?"

"I see," Miron replied. "You belong to the police."

They both looked at each other in the darkness, on guard, cogitating.

"Well,"—the man tapped Miron on his arm again—"well, brother, will you try it? You can easily get it out of Stroffski to-night. There's ten thousand in your pocket if you do. Be quick, now! I can't stay in this place any more—it gives one the shivers. Come, out with it! Will you?"

Miron Popylishko looked out through the door into the black, impenetrable night. As he gazed, the long, thin, white, tapering fingers of the little, drunken man he had left behind in the drink-shop seemed to loom out of the darkness and float towards him through the air, twitching, probing, itching, clutching, their long nails, filed off into sharp points, extending like the claws of a wild animal. They appeared to hover, feeling and groping in the darkness, then suddenly to clasp him icily, gently, caressingly by the throat. He thought he was about to choke, and at the same moment the deep, velvet eyes of Sonia Ispravinka seemed to be looking up into his in appealing, aching intensity.

As he sat peering into the darkness, Miron Popylishko suddenly seemed to live through all the memories of his past life. Little incidents of his infancy came back to him, and he was with his old child playmates again, romping in the village among the snow. He remembered how his father had once beaten him with a belt, because he had cried one day of the cold; and again how pleased the old man was when, one day, he had returned with a great cut over the eye, which he had received in a fight with a boy who had insulted him. He remembered his first day in the great capital, his first meeting with Sonia Ispravinka. Then the pressure of the man's hand upon his sleeve recalled him to the little shed where he was sitting, gazing mesmerically into the black stillness.

Those clutching, twitching, white, thin hands, those glowing, velvet, upturned eyes, they appeared to shape themselves into one solemn word—"death, death, death," burning into his brain. Every pulse in his body throbbed. He sat quite still, while his head seemed to be whirling around before those hands and eyes incandescent and terrible, and every sense within him shrieked aloud, and his heart seemed seared as with a hot iron. He thought he had sat so for an hour. His mind seemed to be giving way. Making a great effort of control, he rose and shook himself like a dog. Then suddenly he felt quite calm and collected, with all reckoning and account settled.

"And if I refuse, friend?" he said at length.

The man, who had risen with Miron, made no answer at first. The two men could just see each other's eyes faintly in the darkness. In the pause which followed Miron's answer, they both stood, conscious that the crisis had come, each seeking to anticipate the other's move.

The man sent up his little, insinuating laugh, which rang round the shed.

"If you refuse, friend?" he said, hissing into Miron's face. "Then Stroffski will be arrested."

Miron made no answer to this. He was considering what he should do.

The man stepped back, and Miron noticed something which shone in his right hand.

"See here, friend," the man said in a tone Miron had not heard before. "I've a revolver in my hand. Don't think you can try any games on with me. There are no tell-tales here, mind. Now, what's your answer?"

Miron had suspected this. The man would probably shoot him if he refused. Inwardly he cursed himself for not having struck the fellow down before. He laughed loudly—

"*Harascho*. Don't frighten me, comrade," he answered. "Ten thousand roubles, you say?"

"That's it, brother," the man laughed back softly. "Ten thousand apiece. My price for the initiation, you see. Pretty good pay, isn't it?"

Miron paused as if he was hesitating. He pulled his cap off and dashed it to the ground.

"I'm game," he said suddenly.

"That's right! That's right, brother!" the man snapped in quickly, taking a step towards Miron.

"Yes, I'm game," Miron repeated. He looked from the man out through the little doorway into the black night, stood for a moment listening, but seeing and hearing nothing, turned round and held out his hand.

The man glanced quickly at it, moved a step nearer, and placed his hand in Miron's massive fist.

"You swear it's a bargain," Miron said, holding the man's hand firmly in his.

"As I live," the man replied impulsively. "As I live, little brother. As I live——"

"Then die, accursed spy!" Miron threw back into his teeth.

In a flash the great hands were about the man's throat, with both thumbs clamped upon the windpipe. Putting out his giant's strength, Miron forced his fingers through the flesh, holding the man out straight before him, and shaking him as a dog worries a rat. The attack was so sudden, the grip around the man's throat so fierce and powerful, that not a cry issued from his lips, save a gurgling rattle of choking breath, as the life was strangled out of him. The arms, at first raised convulsively at Miron's face, fell listlessly away, the head rocked, as it was shaken on its trunk, drooping and lifeless. Soon it was as much as Miron could do to hold up the man, suddenly grown heavy with the weight of death. But he held on, seeing only the thin, white fingers of Stroffski clutching the air before him, kneading his strong fingers into the bleeding flesh, shaking, pressing, and throttling. Then, when he could sustain the weight no longer, he relaxed his hold. The lifeless figure stood rigid and upright for a second, as if by natural balance, heaved and fell with a hard thud on the ground.

Miron Popylishko contemplated the man lying at his feet, bent down, slowly wiped the blood off his hands on the man's coat, rose, and instinctively glanced round.

In the doorway a man stood calmly observing him.

The Cossacks! He was taken!

He sprang to the far end of the shed, with his back to the wall, determined not to be seized alive. He uttered no sound. He was conscious of no fear. He stood watching the figure at the doorway, expecting every second to be shot at.

So for a while in the darkness they stood.

Presently the man standing in the doorway advanced a step and spoke. "Miron Popylishko," the voice said quietly, "it was well done. I congratulate you."

Miron leaned back against the wall, too confused and astonished to speak.

Then Miron noticed that it was a very small man who was speaking. In a business-like way the little man walked up to the prostrate body, struck a match, and put his face to the spy's lips.

"He's dead," he said simply, after he had so tested the man's breathing for a bit, "choked dead," he added, looking round at Miron again. "There's one more gone to his reckoning, anyhow."

He knelt down by the body, rummaged in all the dead man's pockets, carefully extracting and placing in his own all the papers and letters he could find.

"Come here and strike a light, will you?" he jerked across to Miron. Then, as Miron advanced and held the burning match, he wrote in large characters on a piece of note-paper which he took from his pocket-book the one word "Spy." And this he fastened with a pin to the dead man's coat.

"Strike another match," he said, throwing open the coat and unbuttoning the inner jacket,



"In the doorway a man stood calmly observing him."

"Do you see?" he exclaimed, pointing to a small metal plate sewn on to the lining. "The badge!"

As the match went out, he rose. Coming close up to Miron, he suddenly lit another match, and the two men stood facing each other.

"Stroffski!" Miron blurted out, as the little, sallow face stood in the flickering light, revealed before him. "Stroffski! Why, I thought you were——"

"I know—I know," Stroffski interrupted in his peculiar, quiet voice. "That was all sham—my drunkenness. Rather a strange thing happened really. You see, I wanted to test you. That was why you were sent here. We intended to put a false spy on you, but this clumsy cuss here prevented that. He took on the job himself, unconsciously, and got his rightful quittance."

They were in the dark again now.

"Then—then it was all a fake, this message, was it?" Miron Popylishko stammered out.

"All a fake, yes," Stroffski replied. "This hound here had his nose on me all day. That is why I pretended to be drunk, to put him off the scent, do you see?"

"Holy Mother!" Miron ejaculated.

"The rum thing is," continued Stroffski, "the cursed idiot did exactly what I had intended one of us should do. He collared you and took you away. However, it's better so. You've stood your test and come through splendidly."

"Stroffski," said Miron, slowly getting hold of the hang of the thing, "then you followed us here?"

"Of course," Stroffski retorted drily.

"And you heard——"

"Everything. Yes. Till the last minute I thought you would turn. I'm glad, Miron Popylishko, you proved a man."

Stroffski held out his hand.

"You're one of us now," he said, as Miron grasped the thin, white fingers, the fingers which—he knew now—had saved his life.

"Mother of Heaven! then there was someone there, after all!" Miron said, thinking of the noise he had heard.

But Stroffski took no notice of that remark.

"You must go now at once," he said. "You can get back if you're quick. It wants seventeen minutes to ten yet. They won't find this thing," he added, looking down at the body, "for two or three days. We must cover him up, though. Here, just give a hand and help me put him away."

Together they raised the corpse, placed it in the trough, and threw a lot of loose snow upon it, till only the face lay exposed.

Stroffski struck a match. He stood for a moment staring at the agonised face, white and horrible, with its glazed eyes almost bursting out of the sockets, spat savagely upon it, stuck the match in the gaping mouth, and walked out.

Neither spoke. They went swiftly across the fields, down the lane round the great wall of the factory, and at the corner of a deserted street Stroffski stopped.

"I'm going back to old Vaska's now," he said. "Go straight home, Miron Popylishko, and tell nobody."

He turned as if to go in the opposite direction, while the long, thin, white fingers twisted furtively about the top breast-button on Miron's coat. The semblance of a smile seemed to curl about the pinched, thin lips.

"By the way," he said, turning on his heel and imitating the spy's voice, "you may tell Sonia. I think you've had your —initiation."

HURRYING CLOUDS.

THERE is a Shepherd in the sky
Who makes the grey sheep travel by;
He goes before, they trot behind,
He calls and calls them on the wind.

When storms run high, and ships are lost,
He hastens on, his grey beard tossed;
Above the wrack, and wreck, and foam,
Men see the grey sheep scurrying home.

AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.

THE 'EIGHTY-SEVEN.

By BARRY PAIN.

IN the dining-room at 17, Wilberforce Square, S.W., the Sunday had received its midday consecration. Luncheon had been made dinner, for the same reason that later in the day dinner would be made supper. "We must think of the servants," said Mrs. Trope. She thought of many other things—of the winter sales, for instance, or of the present trouble about Patricia and Edward—but she never quite forgot the servants.

The roast sirloin had passed away, the tart and the Cheddar had followed in their solemn Sabbatical order. Mrs. Trope and her two daughters had retired. There remained now the fruits of the earth in their season—walnuts, to be precise—and the decanters, and Mr. Trope. It was one of Mr. Trope's many good habits to take a glass of port after the luncheon-dinner of Sunday. A silvery-haired gentleman of rather presidential appearance, he paused with the nut-crackers in his fleshy hand—paused and reflected.

There had been an unwonted gloom over the dinner-table, and it had not escaped Mr. Trope's parental eye that Patricia, his elder daughter, had been unable to eat. There was to be an interview with Edward at four, and Mr. Trope foresaw that it would be painful.

But what could be done? Edward was a pleasant young fellow, and old Purdon, his father, had been the intimate friend of Mr. Trope. Edward Purdon under ordinary circumstances would have been always a welcome guest at Mr. Trope's house. But Edward had been insane enough to fall in love with Patricia Trope. He wished to marry her—and he had three hundred a year. Was Patricia to be taken from the easeful and dignified life of 17, Wilberforce Square, S.W., to be plunged into a penurious struggle and a suburban insignificance? Clearly not. "I'm only doing what I know to be best for you," Mr. Trope had said to his daughter.

"I know," said Patricia, who was heart-broken, but much too proud to weep. "But I wish you wouldn't."

So as he cracked his last walnut, Mr. Trope, being kindly of heart, tried to think of one or two complimentary phrases by which he might soften the blow to Edward. Patricia might go away for a holiday for a while, and he'd buy her a present; she had said some weeks before that she would like a string of pearls, and she should have them. It is not only the cruel who give stones to those who are crying for bread.

The door opened softly, but Mr. Trope did not look round. Parlourmaids are sometimes anxious to begin their Sunday afternoons as early as possible; Mr. Trope had observed it on previous occasions. "It's all right, Willis," he said, "you can clear. Just take my port through into the library, and——"

But it was not Willis; it was Mrs. Trope.

"John, dear," she said, "the thought has occurred to me that if we continued her dress allowance——"

"Four hundred instead of three. No, Agnes, no use. She simply couldn't live on it. It's no kindness to let her try. When I married you, I had a thousand a year and prospects—which have been more than fulfilled. There's a right way and a wrong way. Here's a girl; one day she wants, naturally enough, a string of pearls, which you may call two hundred and fifty sovereigns, and the next day she wants to go off on three hundred a year. Ab-so-lutely preposterous!"

"Of course," said Mrs. Trope, "I don't understand these money matters, and never did. I've been wise enough to leave that to you, John. I'm sure I don't even know how much money we've got. But it is so difficult to know what to do for the best. Poor Patricia! She's gone off to her room, and I'm afraid she really is crying this time, and Martia—you know how devoted she is to her sister—is quite depressed too; she just sits at the piano, without playing anything, and saying that money is nothing but a curse."

"Then she's a very silly child," said Mr. Trope presidentially, "and you can tell her so from me. Why, bless my soul, anybody would think I was going to kill the

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young man. I'm not even going to forbid him the house—not even that. Patricia will see him every now and then, say once every three months. I'm not obstinate about it. If he sticks to business properly, in another eight or ten years—if they're still of the same mind—he may be in a position to marry Patricia, and nobody will be better pleased than myself. Why, I like the young fellow, and I liked his father before him—an able man, old Purdon, if he'd only have kept clear of speculation. You go and see Patricia, and tell her things are not so bad as she thinks. No engagement of any kind at present, that's all I say. And I'll take my port into the library; Willis will be waiting to clear."

The old gentleman grasped the decanter and his glass with great care, and passed through the door at the further end of the dining-room. In the library a bright wood fire was burning, and a chair of seductive ease had been drawn up to it. Beside the chair on a low table were the Sunday papers, and there was still room on the table for a decanter and a glass. Mr. Trope lowered himself with dignity into the easy-chair.

If Mr. Trope had continued his usual Sabbath procedure, he would have taken two glasses of port, neither more nor less, glanced through one newspaper, and subsided for the space of one hour into a contented and refreshing slumber.

To-day he had too much on his mind to be able to interest himself in newspapers. They remained folded on the table; but he poured out a glass of port, sipped it, and said "Ah-h!"

What a wine it was!

It was not the oldest port in his cellar, for he still had a comfortable provision of the '78 which he himself had laid down. He had known that grand and historic port, the '47, but that had come to him from his father's cellars. The last bottle had gone now. The wine that he tasted now was the '87, surely, he thought, own sister to the '47.

Mr. Trope had laid down the '87 also, thirty dozens of it. But this bottle did not belong to that original lot. It came from a case which he had bought at a sale in '96, and although of the same year, it was of a different shipper. That wise man, Mr. Trope, had decanted it himself.

The real port-drinkers, he reflected with a pious melancholy, were dying out. Men that he knew were proud that they never touched it, thereby showing gross ignorance and a poor, ramshackle physique. Others contented themselves with that insignificant and emasculated thing, a wood-port; we are a decadent race, and the doctor is abroad in the land.

Mr. Trope sipped again—and again. Yes, it was a queer thing that he should be drinking that bottle of '87; for he had bought it with the intention of giving it back to the original owner. Poor old Purdon! He had watched his books, his pictures, his silver, his cellar dispersed among the people who had the money to buy them. Very good prices had been made, and old Purdon was pleased. All debt would be cleared, and there would still be enough to give Edward a start in life. "Glad you had the '87," he whispered to Mr. Trope, who had only bought it to give it back to his friend again. Before he had the chance—that very night—Purdon was stricken down, and two days later was dead.

So Mr. Trope, in his habitual health, was drinking his dead friend's port preparatory to spoiling the life of his dead friend's son. But that was an absurd way to put it. It was wine he'd bought and paid for (he filled his glass again). And back it would have gone into his old friend's cellar if death had not intervened. He had acted generously, certainly he had. He preferred to act generously.

Still . . . well, a man's first duty was surely to protect his own daughter's interests—to protect her against herself, if need were.

The glass of port winked a ruby eye at the fire. The fire winked a golden eye back at the port again. It was almost as if these inanimate things conversed together.

"Of course, I don't know how much money he has," spluttered the fire. "I only came to-day."

"I know him well," the port winked back. "A very warm man, Mr. Trope. Could afford to do a lot of things that he won't do."

Mr. Trope extinguished that ruby eye by the natural process of imbibition, but still that feeling of Sabbath-afternoon contentment, due to arrive with the second glass, remained out of sight. His wife and daughters had been gloomy, and gloom is infectious. Gloom of the very deepest pervaded the innocent and businesslike mind of Mr. Trope.

What did it matter? We gathered things together, an investment here, and an investment there, a few dozens of a vintage of this year or that, but they would all be dispersed in the end—by a sale resultant on



"The next moment Patricia was kissing her father frantically and exclaiming: 'Oh, Mummy!'"

failure, or by death, against which even success is powerless. We may buy things and pay for them, but they are never our own absolutely; at the most, we are only tenants for life. Thirty dozen of the '87 originally, and eleven that had been old Purdon's—he'd never live to drink it all, never. And he'd no son to inherit it, and girls didn't understand it. Oh dear, oh dear!

It was at this point that Mr. Trope asked himself if he had had his second glass of port. He may, or may not, have known the correct answer to this riddle. But he filled his glass again.

Possibly the breaking of one habit caused another to snap, for Mr. Trope found himself wondering if it was worth while to cling to the last halfpenny till the last moment. Could he buy anything that he would enjoy more than the happiness of those he loved best? The train of thought thus started took upon itself a rosy glow; it warmed and pleased him. He'd do it. Yes, by Jove! he would. And now he would close his eyes and get those few moments of slumber so valuable on Sunday afternoons to strenuous, generous natures who have——

The door opened, and Mary (it being Willis's Sunday out) announced Mr. Edward Purdon.

"Bring another glass, Mary. How'do, Edward, my boy?"

Edward Purdon was rather good-looking, quite manly, very shy, and desperately respectful. When the point was reached, he put his case with most lamentable modesty and diffidence.

"So they've raised you twenty-five, have they?" said papa. "That's satisfactory, as far as it goes. But if I permit this, you'll have to be very careful. You see, your income and Patricia's four hundred together only come to seven hundred and twenty-five. Not much margin there."

"Patricia's four hundred!—I didn't know she had any money, sir."

"I know you didn't. No more did she. For that matter, no more did I until—until quite recently. But it makes all the difference. Otherwise I couldn't have listened to you—not for a moment—much though we all like you, Edward. As it is, living very simply, you might be able to manage, and I'm willing that you should try. (The glass, Mary? Oh, yes. Fill it.) And I think there is a toast we might drink."

And with that toast Mr. Trope finished his shameless and irregular third glass of port. And then while Edward was doing his best to say a few of the right things that the occasion demanded, Mr. Trope rose from his place.

"I'll send Patsey to you," he said.

When Mr. Trope entered the drawing-room, Patricia had a book, her mother had some embroidery, and Martia was seated at the piano; but nobody was getting on with anything, and they all raised hopeless eyes towards the master of the house.

"Patsey," said her father, "there's a young man in the library wants to talk to you."

Patricia gave one gulp. "You don't mean—you haven't sent him away?"

"If you want him sent away, you'll have to do it yourself. I think it's highly probable he'll stop to supper, if you ask him prettily; and if you'd like a string of pearls for a wedding present, I'll think about it."

The next moment Patricia was kissing her father frantically and exclaiming: "Oh, Mummy!" and "It can't be true!" and "Martia, Martia!" And the moment after she was in the library.

"Then, dear," said Mrs. Trope, still agape with astonishment, "after all, you're——"

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Trope, "I've made some sort of an arrangement which removes the principal difficulty. Give us a tune, Martia."

"If I could only play, sing, dance and yell for joy all at once, you darling!"

"Dear me," said Mr. Trope, "everybody seems to be very excited."

* * * * *

It all happened more than a year ago. Mr. Trope's habits have resumed their regularity. The port which is now being taken into 17, Wilberforce Square—well, that is some which Mr. Trope is laying down for his grandson.

How the Aberdeen Terrier Got his Long Back.

By COULSON KERNAHAN.

I AM the owner of a very long-backed Aberdeen terrier, and talking to a small boy of my acquaintance, who had been detected in the act of torturing a cat, I made the length of my dog's back a text for the preaching of a sermon of the "awful example" order.

"Yours is a funny dog!" commented the child. "I wonder what made him so long! Do you know?"

"I have heard explanations," I answered evasively. "Shall I tell you one that was told me the other day?"

He assented, and in my best narrative style I drew a picture of the world as it was when the lion lay down with the lamb, and when the entire creation—from human beings and animals, down to the least living thing—never thought of injuring or being cruel to each other or to creatures of another kind, but dwelt together in unity and love. Into this Eden, I said, stole a disturbing element in the shape of a dog of a certain breed, whom some dark and devil-born instinct moved to break the primal peace by developing a desire to hunt down and to torture cats.

Incidentally I remarked, by way of improving the occasion and preparing my congregation of one for the good seed I proposed to scatter upon the fallow field of his mind, that all sorrow and misery came of selfishness and cruelty, but for which this world would be the most beautiful place imaginable, and that the lot of little boys—presuming, of course, that they were never guilty of torturing dumb animals, upon the enormity and inhumanity of which I laid special stress—would be one unending round of Saturday afternoon half-holidays, with no evening lessons to prepare at the end of it, and no impositions or caning to dread on the following Monday morning.

My small listener's murmured approvals of sympathy and applause seemed to me the best possible tribute to the power of my oratory and to the wisdom of the method I was pursuing. "Most people," I said to myself, "would have gone to work in a less subtle, not to say clumsier way, in their well-meant effort to eradicate the poisonous weed of cruelty from the garden of this intelligent little fellow's mind. Instead of appealing, as I am, to his better nature, they would have soundly thrashed him for his cruelty. This he might consider out of all proportion to the offence, and so a sense of injustice and revolt would be aroused which might find an outlet in further cruelty, cunningly committed when none was there to see."

Then I went on to draw a terrible picture of the tortures inflicted upon innocent and unhappy cats by this dog, who, by falling from his original angelic state, had brought pain and misery into the animal world. I described minutely and vividly, and much to my hearer's interest, the incidents of a cat hunt on a particular morning when the half-maddened creature, bleeding and dragging painfully behind it the broken stump of a lacerated tail, had contrived to escape from its tormentor and had made a magnificent dash for cover and dear life by bolting—the dog in full pursuit—for a rabbit hole in the hillside.

"Which got there first?" interrupted my listener excitedly.

"The cat," I said.

"And what did the dog do? Go on! Be quick! I want to hear about it."

"The dog," I said calmly, "tried to follow her into the hole.

"And then," I went on, holding up an accusing forefinger and speaking with the sternness and solemnity of a judge about to pass sentence, "and then Nemesis and Retribution overtook him, as sooner or later Nemesis and Retribution invariably and inevitably overtake those—be they dogs or be they boys—who torture dumb animals.

"You may have noticed," I continued, resuming a conversational tone, "that my dog has a big head and large ears that stand out. The dog of whom I am telling you

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had a big head and large ears. What happened was that, owing to the size and shape of his head and ears, he got wedged so fast in the hole that he was unable either to go further in or to get out."

With relentless realism I drew a picture of the terrible but deserved sufferings of a dog thus doomed to die by slow stages and in darkness, by the gnawing pangs of hunger and the maddening tortures of thirst.

"But what did the cat do?" interrupted my listener, whose appetite for horrors was not to be slaked by what he apparently considered my inadequate description of the sufferings of a single dog.

"Didn't the cat die of hunger and thirst, too? And which lasted out the longest? and which did it hurt most?"

"I have reason to believe," I answered severely, "that the cat was small enough in head and body to slip through and out at a hole the other side, and no doubt lived to fulfil a cat's destiny, that of becoming the mother of a numerous progeny of kittens."

The boy heaved a sigh of disappointment, and, bored by the blameless and domestic after-career of the cat, returned to the dog.

"How long did it take the dog to die?" he inquired; "and which was worst—being hungry or being thirsty?"

"The dog," I answered, "did not die. His sufferings and the punishment of his cruelty were not yet at an end."

"Oh!" said my auditor, with renewed curiosity and a return of cheerfulness, "I'd like to hear about it."

"For three whole days," I continued, "the dog suffered the indescribable agonies of darkness, hunger, and thirst. On the fourth day a man, who was passing, heard faint and stifled moans coming from the rabbit-hole, and seeing what had happened, instantly set to work to release the suffering animal."

"Did he blow him out with gunpowder?" inquired the boy hopefully.

"Of course not," I said indignantly. "That would have been almost as cruel as to leave him there to die. Besides, they hadn't any gunpowder in those days. He would have dug the poor thing out if he could, but the ground was too hard, so the only way left was to pull him out by the tail."

The boy grinned. "He had to pull pretty hard, I expect," was his comment.

"So hard," I answered, "that it's worse than being put upon the rack. Do you know what a rack is?"

"Yes," was the eager reply. "Father's got a book called 'Foxe's Book of Martyrs' at home. I mustn't read story books on Sunday 'cept Bible tales like that. There's pictures of people on the rack in it, and they're prime. They fastened people's head and legs to the two ends of a thing that screwed out, like our dining-room table does when father has his Bible-class to tea. Then they turned a handle and pulled till——"

"Yes, I know," I interrupted hurriedly. "It was something like that which happened to this dog. It was worse, in fact, than being put upon the rack. Fortunately he was a very young dog, whose bones and whose body were soft and stretchable. They released him at last, after indescribable suffering, pulled out to very nearly twice his ordinary length, and ever since then, so I'm told, dogs of that breed have stand-up ears, big heads, and long bodies, to remind them of the deserved and terrible fate of one of their ancestors who was cruel to a cat."

My listener's pent up interest—and I hoped sympathy—found outlet in a long-drawn sigh as I ended my story, and the fact that he was silent for half a minute—evidently thinking over my words—gave me cause to suppose that my object lesson in the wickedness of cruelty to animals had come home to him and might bear fruit in the future.

Then he looked up.

"Were you cruel to dumb animals when you were a boy?" he inquired, measuring my six feet one inch figure with a critical eye.

"Certainly not," I answered indignantly.

"Then what made you so tall and so long?" he asked.

"Well," I said, "for one reason, my father was tall before me."

"Was *he* cruel to them?" was the next question.

"No, he's kinder to them than I am," I answered hotly.

"Then how did *he* get so tall?" went on my cross-examiner.

"I suppose he grew so," was my reply.

"Perhaps the dogs grew so, too," remarked the youngster sagely.

"Perhaps they did," I said lamely. "I'm only telling you the story as it was told to me."

"And perhaps your father wasn't very kind to them when he was a boy," was the next remark.

"Oh, yes, he was!" I replied decisively.

"How do *you* know? He was pretty old when you knew him, wasn't he?" asked the child, with his head on one side.

"Pretty old when I knew him! How ridiculously you put it," I replied. "Why, of course he was. You don't suppose he was my father when he was your age, do you?"

"Then how do you *know* he wasn't unkind to animals when he was a boy?" persisted this incipient King's Counsel.

"How do I know?" I exclaimed. "Why, because my father couldn't be cruel to dumb animals if he tried. It isn't in him to be so. He's the kindest and most humane of men."

"Did he ever try?" was the next question.

"Now, look here, my boy," I said exasperatedly, "I can't stand here arguing with you all day. I shall only answer one more question — no, of course he didn't."



"'Did he blow him out with gunpowder?'"

"Ah!" triumphantly, "then perhaps he *might* have been, for mother says *you never know what you can do till you try.*"

I no longer attempt to instruct the small boy of to-day in kindness to animals by telling him stories and by appealing to his conscience through his imagination. I appeal now to quite another part of him and with a switch.

AIM IN EDUCATION.

By ARTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON.

THERE never was a time when there was so much talk and thought about education. It is a standing dish in Parliament. There are numberless educational committees organising, discussing and reporting; there are associations which represent the teachers of every subject in the curriculum; and yet if one reads what is said and written on the subject, if one attends committees and congresses, one finds, to one's bewilderment, that almost every question incidental to education is discussed, except the aim and object of the elaborate process. Questions of organisation, of expenses, of ways and means, of plant, of hygiene, are all minutely debated. The subject of denominational teaching is made an excuse for paying off old scores of social jealousy and class animosity. In secondary education, the battle wages round the curriculum; every congress condemns the programme as too elaborate, and holds firmly on to the special subject in which it is itself interested. The real truth is that we are a practical and not an intellectual nation. We have convinced ourselves that there is some commercial value in education, and that it is the birthright of every Briton; and having done that, we discuss organisation and finance and methods with whole-hearted interest, but seldom think of considering what is, after all, the main question, what education is intended to effect, what its aim ought to be, and whether the education we are giving is in the least degree adapted to the needs and necessities of the recipients. The fact is that we like administration, and rejoice in reducing things to a system; and when we have got our system, we are content; our joy is to fit into it every subject that is suggested, and as long as we know what our school time-tables are, and feel sure that at a particular hour the children will go from one subject to another, we care very little what is taught; we are content, like Mrs. Norris in "Mansfield Park," to tell our little victims to be good and to mind their book. On the other hand, many teachers, and those not the least efficient and enthusiastic, seem to be more interested in questions of method and process than in the results obtained; and this is not to be wondered at, still less to be criticised; the business of a craftsman is not to refuse to construct what he is set to do, on the ground that the article he produces is not one which people ought to require, but to make the best article he can upon the lines laid down; and possibly it is as well that we have organised first. As Dr. Johnson pointed out, illustrating his contention by a forcible metaphor, it is more important to teach a child something than to leave him untaught while you debate what is the best thing to teach him first.

Now, let us take a type of education, and see how far it fulfils its aim, and attempt to define what the aim should be. Whatever else is certain, it is certain that however much we save labour by machinery, there will still be required a large number of people to perform the necessary work of the world, providing and preparing food, building houses, navigating ships, down to the homeliest and least glorified of occupations. Whatever else we do, we must be very careful not to educate a generation out of an inclination—or, at all events, a readiness—to perform these tasks. And here comes in the problem of rural education. It is perfectly right and just that boys of higher abilities, of whatever kind, should not be hampered by being born under poor and humble conditions. We want to make available whatever ability we have for the service of the State; and thus if we are quite sure that any particular boy has abilities of a better kind, he should be enabled by education to realise those abilities; but if, on the other hand, we give to all children alike the sort of education which is needed to develop higher abilities, we tend to educate those whose lot not only will be, but ought to be, to perform the more mechanical work of the world, into discontent with those conditions, yet without equipping them to perform work which it is a mistake to call

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higher, but which needs, at all events, a more special sort of ability.

What ought to be the aim, then, of education in the case of the boys who will have to do agricultural work, and in the case of the girls who will be, as a matter of course, the wives of the same class? The aim must be twofold—to enable them to do their work willingly and with interest, and, further, to enable them to use and enjoy their leisure time. It would seem to be clear that the first condition of successful education in the case of such boys would be to interest them in country life and country surroundings; to train their observation of plants and birds and weather, to make them realise what is going on round them as far as possible, and the way in which Nature does her work—to train them, in fact, in Nature-study and elementary science—concrete things which they can test by observation; while the girls, on the other hand, should be taught, as far as possible, all that bears on household management and domestic work; whatever

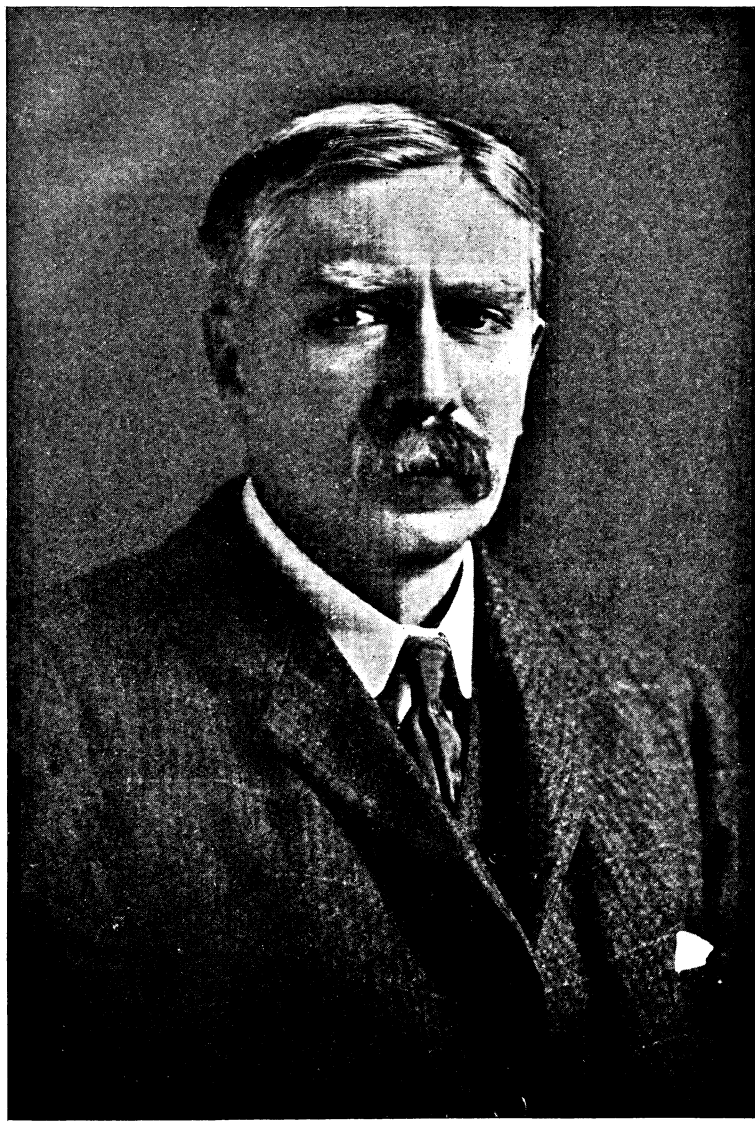


Photo by] [*Elliott & Fry.*

MR. ARTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON.

else is added, this is the main thing—that they should be able to conduct their households efficiently and economically, and to bring up their children sensibly. Then, as to the other side, the use and enjoyment of leisure, the point surely is to enable them to find pleasure in reading and to cultivate the imagination. Of course, to develop the sense of citizenship, children should have some general idea of the history of their own country, but it should be a picturesque idea rather than a technical knowledge; and thus it would be natural to emphasise, as far as possible, the historical associations of the locality where they happen to live. It could be, for instance, nothing but a gain for the folk who live in view of the downs at Lewes to know the story of the great fight between Simon de Montfort and Henry III., and how the armies manœuvred over the grassy shoulders of the hill. Agricultural life is bound to be in one sense dull—that is to say, it cannot share the brisk interchange of relations and the pleasant stir of city life; but it cannot be made acceptable by attempting to import into it the excitements of the town—that can only end in discontent—rather by educating, as far as possible, a quieter kind of interest and enjoyment, so that we may develop what is the true class-ideal—namely, pride in work, honourable traditions, sturdy independence, a contentment which is deliberate, and not a servile acquiescence—and not tend to arouse a mere restless desire for material advancement and an ambition to rise, as it is foolishly called, in the social scale.

It would not be difficult to multiply instances of the same lack of aim, of adaptation of the curriculum to meet the special needs of the class concerned. Secondary education suffers similarly from the attempt to force a rigid scheme of humanistic culture upon minds in many cases incapable of profiting by it or applying it. In the case, for instance, of boys destined to commercial life, the aim should be primarily to equip them for practical and efficient work, and at the same time to stimulate imagination as well as interest in the progress and expansion of the modern world. The classical ideal of literary culture is not adapted to attract the ordinary mind. Its appeal is to minds of a somewhat high order of artistic perception and literary appreciation; it does not fit sufficiently into modern conditions or touch life at enough points; and what we need is a wider range of intellectual stimulus. Too often a secondary education results in neither equipping a boy for practical life nor evoking intellectual interest; but teachers should not consider that they have performed their part of the contract unless a boy is rendered efficient as a worker and a wage-earner, or until some serious attempt has been made to discover his intellectual aptitude, and to stimulate his mind in congenial directions.

This, then, is the task which lies nearest to our hand at the present time; to define more clearly the aim of education, to devise and co-ordinate a more elastic series of types of education, keeping in mind in the first place an ideal of practical efficiency, and in the second place the development of independent and congenial intellectual enjoyment. *Mens cujusque, is est quisque*, says the old motto—"The mind's the man"; and our object ought to be to educate first the citizen, in his relation to life and society, to fit him alike for his duties and his privileges, and, secondly, the individual, by enabling him as far as possible to develop the best and strongest of his special characteristics. For we cannot educate citizens unless we can teach individuals to subordinate their own inclinations to the public welfare; while the public welfare is best served by developing to the highest degree possible the special faculties and powers of the individual.

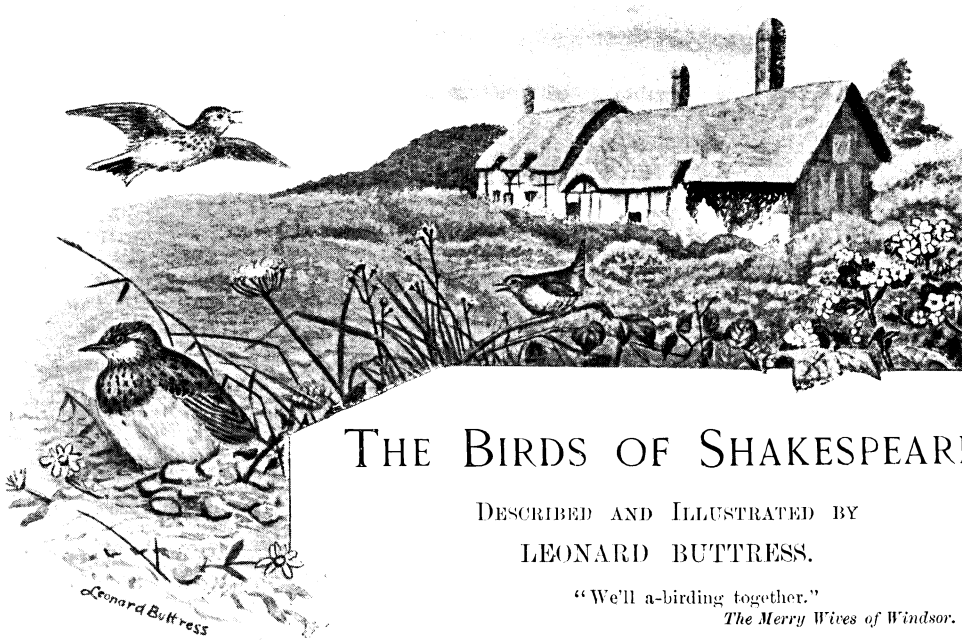
EGERIA'S SILENCE.

HER thought that, like a brook beside the way,
Sang to my steps through all the wandering year,
Has ceased from melody—O Love, allay
My sudden fear!

She cannot fail—the beauty of that brow
Could never flower above a desert heart—
Somewhere beneath, the well-spring even now
Lives, though apart.

Some day, when winter has renewed her fount
With cold, white-folded snows and quiet rain,
O Love, O Love, her stream again will mount
And sing again!

HENRY NEWBOLT.



THE BIRDS OF SHAKESPEARE.

DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED BY

LEONARD BUTTRESS.

"We'll a-birding together."
The Merry Wives of Windsor.

THAT Shakespeare has mentioned by name, in his plays and poems, no fewer than fifty species of British wild birds is in itself proof of his intimate knowledge and love of them.

That he knew well all the fables and folk-lore associated with the wild creatures, we have ample evidence in his writings. The birds of "ill-omen"—to take an example—are introduced with great effect into many a solemn passage.

Frequent and dramatic allusion is made to the "ill-boding" raven: a bird from the earliest time regarded with superstitious awe. The owl, too, is stigmatised by Lady Macbeth as "the fatal bellman, which gives the stern'st good-night." In many other passages the poor bird is referred to as the "ominous" and "fearful" "bird of night." Even his wing is considered by the witches as an ingredient good enough—or, rather, bad enough—for their "charm of powerful trouble," and forthwith popped into the cauldron!

But it is rather to the "Nature-study" side of Shakespeare's ornithological allusions that we would draw attention. And as we accompany him by "the brook that brawls along the wood" or "under the shade of melancholy boughs," we cannot fail to be charmed by his accurate observations, and astonished at his knowledge of bird-life, for the age in which he lived.

Indeed, habits are observed which none but a field-naturalist would note. Here is an instance. We are warned in *The Winter's Tale*: "When the kite builds, look to lesser linen." Shakespeare knew, as the naturalist of to-day knows, that this bird is inordinately fond of decorating its nest with any pieces of linen, paper, or coloured rag it can purloin. The Egyptian kite's nest has been called "the marine store-shop of the desert" from this very fact.

The poet is naturally inspired by the song birds, and Shakespeare makes frequent allusion to such noted songsters as the thrush, blackbird, redbreast, hedge-sparrow, lark, and wren, and their "melodious madrigals."

But of all the woodland choir, he would seem to give first place "to the nightingale's complaining notes." He must have had many opportunities of listening to its song in his own native place, for it is still common enough at Stratford-on-Avon. The old fable tells us that Philomela, daughter of King Pandion, was changed into a nightingale; hence Shakespeare frequently alludes to the bird by the name of Philomel. For the same reason, doubtless, he invariably speaks of *her* singing; though, in Nature, it is, of course, the male bird that sings. "Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree."

In company with many other poets, he

represents her mournful notes as caused by pressing her breast against a thorn.

> She poor bird, as all forlorn
> Lean'd her breast up-till a thorn.

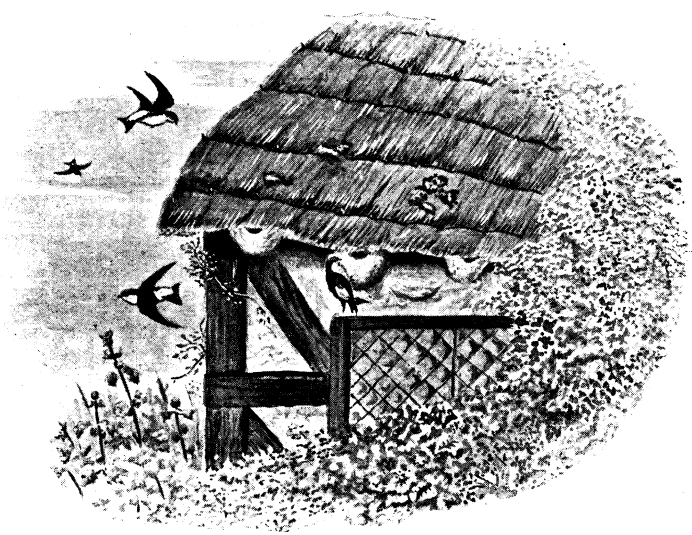
A pretty myth this, originating from the bird's habit of frequenting thick hawthorn brakes and bramble hedges.

The skylark, perhaps no less a favourite, is mentioned in twenty-five different passages.

The bird's early-rising habits are frequently noted. In contradistinction to "lamenting Philomel," it is the herald of the morn. "Merry larks are ploughmen's clocks," indicating that then, as now, the day's labour in the field began as "the blythsome bird" "from his moist cabinet mounts up on high."

cording to tradition, as covering the "sad grave" with flowers and leaves, "with charitable bill." Elsewhere, however, it is mentioned by the more familiar name of robin-redbreast.

It would be perhaps unfair to leave Shakespeare's song-birds without reference to "the wren with little quill." Though generally it lays four or five eggs only in its beautiful domed nest, the exclamation in *Twelfth Night*, "Look where the youngest wren of nine comes!" would suggest that Shakespeare had examined a nest containing the not unusual complement of eight or nine fluffy mites. Mr. Hudson, in his "British Birds," has written: "Not long ago, in a wood in Berkshire, I saw eight young wrens sitting in a



"THIS GUEST OF SUMMER,
THE TEMPLE-HAUNTING MARTLET."

Macbeth.—Act i., Scene 6.

The "plain-song cuckoo gray" is versed in many well-known lines redolent of merry spring-time. "But, since the cuckoo builds not for himself," Shakespeare gives us a vivid mental picture of the disproportionate size and voracity of the young intruder to its foster-parent. "For you know, nuncle, the hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long, that it had its head bit off by its young." The marked perference of this bird for depositing its egg in the hedge-sparrow's nest did not escape the poet's keen observation, for, to quote again—

> Why should the worm intrude the maiden bud
> Or hateful cuckoos hatch in sparrows' nests?

In *Cymbeline*, under its old name of "ruddock," the redbreast is described, ac-

row." Shakespeare pays a high tribute to the fearlessness and pugnacity of this little bird, when he says—

> for the poor wren
> The most diminutive of birds will fight,
> Her young ones in the nest, against the owl.

The swallow's habit of sometimes flying low over the meadows in search of its insect prey, is beautifully expressed in the line "and run like swallows on the plain."

Mention of this bird recalls to mind the fact that Shakespeare evidently knew something of the law of migration, to this day one of the greatest mysteries of bird-life. "The swallow follows not summer more willingly than we your lordship," is one of many lines that fully endorse this view.

Again, in the beautiful description of the nesting martins on Macbeth's castle we read of "*This guest of summer*, the temple-haunting martlet."

Nor are the winter migrants forgotten, for the Fool in *King Lear* says: "Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way."

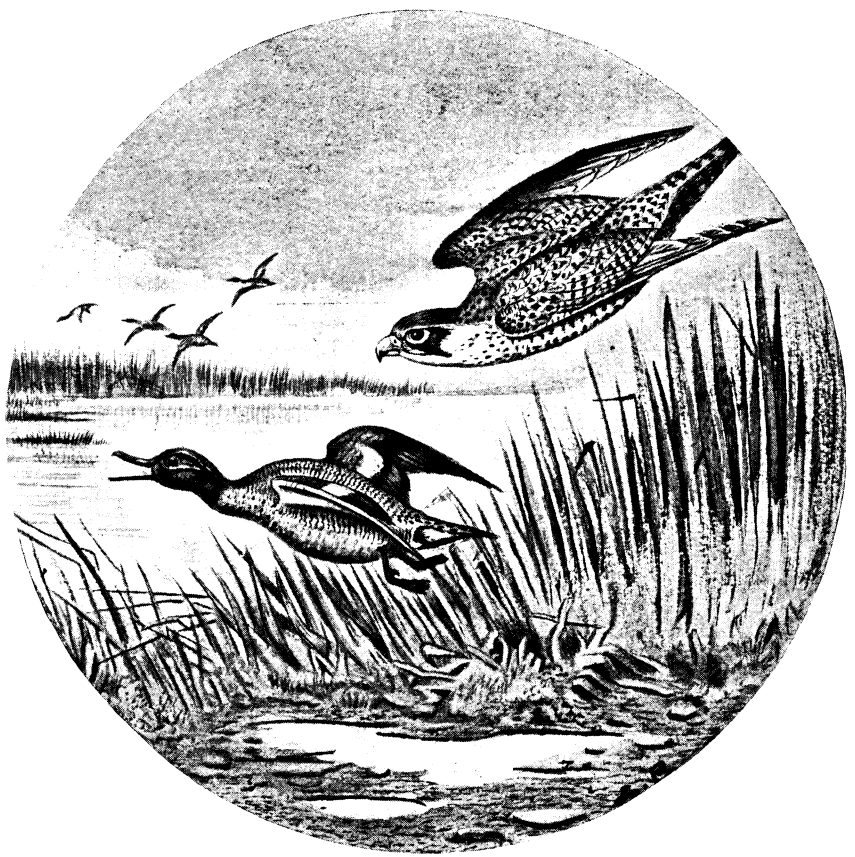
Shakespeare, on many occasions, alludes to the talking power of parrots, and in one instance mentions the same imitative faculty in our friend the starling, for Hotspur exclaims: "I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak nothing but 'Mortimer.'"

By the banks of the Avon the poet-naturalist must often have been gladdened by the sight of a kingfisher—or halcyon, as he called it—flashing past. Here, too, he probably observed—

> A dive-dapper peering through a wave
> Who, being look'd on, ducks as quickly in,

and in this accurate description we recognise the little grebe or dabchick, still known in some parts of the country as the "di-dapper." "Peering through a wave" is peculiarly expressive of the way in which these birds entirely submerge their bodies when alarmed, only the head remaining above water.

The turtle-dove has of course been held up by Shakespeare as the emblem of conjugal fidelity, as by other poets from time immemorial: he assures us that "So turtles pair, that never mean to part."

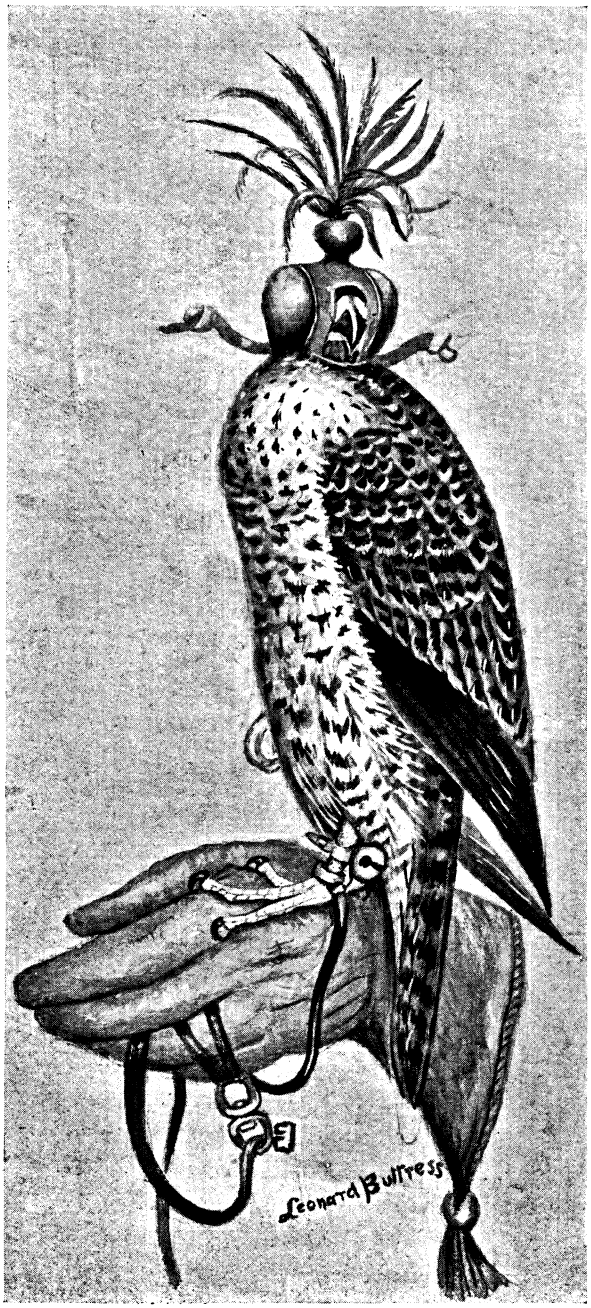


"FLYING AT THE BROOK."
2 Henry VI.—Act ii.

That it is "far from her nest the lapwing cries away" no one will doubt, who has hunted for plovers' eggs, and watched the many strange artifices, and listened to the distressing cries, with which the bird strives to draw the intruder from her precious eggs or young. It is a fact, too, not overlooked by Shakespeare, that the baby lapwing is able to run immediately after being hatched, and almost, as he puts it, "with the shell on his head,"

There is little reason to doubt that Shakespeare was a sportsman as well as a naturalist, and that, as often happens, his sport brought him into contact with much that he could observe and admire in Nature.

On this supposition we may picture to ourselves some winter evening's "bat-fowling" expedition in which he as a boy took part, when, amidst the shouts of the youth and the flare of cresset-lights, the poor birds were taken as they rose from the sheltering bushes. Or with "birding-piece" in hand, we may imagine him staiking the "doting mallard," his stealthy figure in turn being watched by the "wild-geese that the creeping fowler eye." While many passages show that he was familiar enough with the use of gins and "springes to catch woodcocks" and other birds, for we read: "Now is the woodcock near the gin," and, "If the springe hold, the cock's mine." He notes with truth, also, the habit of wild ducks when wounded, of seeking refuge amid the thickest reed and undergrowth. "Alas, poor hurt fowl, now will he creep into sedges!"



"TASSEL-GENTLE."
Romeo and Juliet.—Act ii., Scene 2.

But of all field-sports, we may take it for granted that falconry was Shakespeare's favourite. His writings teem with allusions to it and his expert knowledge of it. To begin with, he lived at a period when the sport was at its height in England, when everyone, who could afford it, carried a hawk on his wrist, at all times and everywhere, even to church.

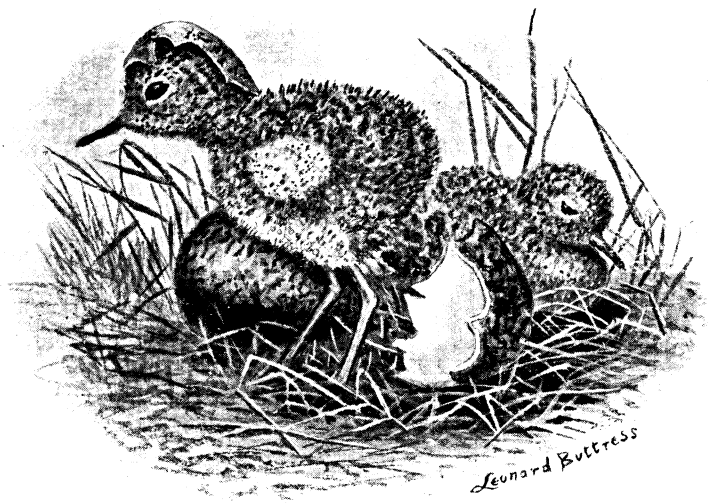
Who that has read the hawking scene in *Henry VI., Part II.*, bristling as it does with the falconers' jargon, can doubt that he had been participator in many a similar one?

His knowledge of the sport was of an intimate nature such as could be professed only by one who practised it. Nay, more, the sense of many a passage is wellnigh unintelligible to one unacquainted with the terms used in falconry. All the hawk's trappings are mentioned again and again. "Hood my unman'd blood, bating in my cheeks." The hood was indispensable to the falconer, as it precluded the possibility of the bird bating or fluttering, when held by the jesses or soft leathern straps that sur-

rounded the bird's legs.

> If I do prove her *haggard*
> Though that her *jesses* were my dear heart-strings,
> I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
> To prey at fortune.

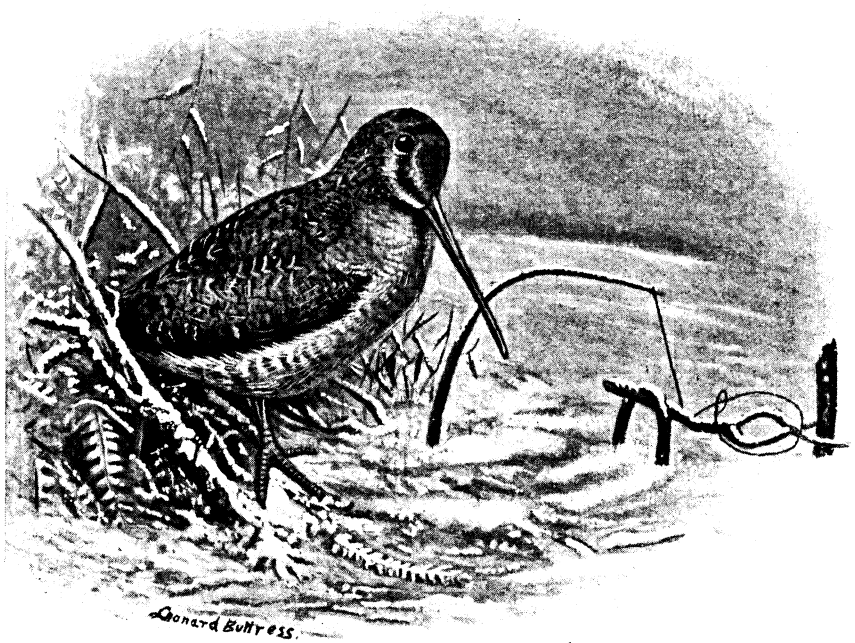
So speaks Othello, when doubting the constancy of Desdemona; and surely the metaphor is immeasurably more beautiful when we understand the meaning of the terms employed. To "let a falcon down the wind" was practically equivalent to losing her. Consequently she was always flown *against* the wind.



"THIS LAPWING RUNS AWAY WITH THE SHELL ON HIS HEAD."
Hamlet.—Act v., Scene 2

The "haggard" was a wild-caught hawk, whereas the "eyass" was a bird taken from the nest. Thus, when Mistress Ford addresses the boy Robin: "How now, my eyas-musket?" she merely says in other words: "How now, my little sparrow-hawk?" "musket" being the old falconer's name for that bird.

The little silver bells attached to each of



"SPRINGES TO CATCH WOODCOCKS."
Hamlet.—Act i., Scene 3.

the falcon's legs were of great service in tracing the whereabouts of the bird when lost or in thick cover. Shakespeare would seem to suggest that they were also a cause of fear to its quarry, indicating the near approach of its enemy. "With trembling fear, as fowl hears falcon's bells."

The line in *Richard II.*, "Imp out our country's broken wing," would certainly seem senseless rubbish, did we not know that "imping" was the falconer's phraseology for repairing a hawk's broken wing feather, with an undamaged one. Juliet, believing that her Romeo has gone, cries—

> Oh, for a falconer's voice
> To lure this tassel-gentle back again!

The bird alluded to as the "tassel-gentle" is the tiercel or male peregrine falcon, while the falconer's cry with which he lured it back was probably similar to Hamlet's "Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come bird, come!"

It is curious that the principal "quarry" flown at with falcons, the heron or hernshaw, is only once mentioned by Shakespeare—namely, when Hamlet declares "I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw."

There are many other instances of Shakespeare's metaphorical use of the technicalities of the sport of falconry. Dr. Madden in his fascinating book, "The Diary of Master William Silence," refers especially to the passage in which Isabella, huddling hawking metaphor with impossible conveyance, says of Angelo—

> This outward-sainted deputy—
> Whose settled visage and deliberate word
> Nips youth i' the head, and follies doth enmew
> As falcon doth and fowl—is yet a devil;
> His filth within being cast, he would appear
> A pond as deep as hell.

The falconer purges his hawk from the grease by what were known as castings—fur or feathers given to her together with her food—a process to which reference is made.



"A DIVE-DAPPER PEERING THROUGH A WAVE,
WHO, BEING LOOKED ON, DUCKS AS QUICKLY IN.

Venus and Adonis.

Mr. Dyce, in his *Glossary*, explains the expression, "Mail'd up in shame," applied to herself by the Duchess of Gloucester (*Henry VI., Part II.*), as meaning wrapped up in shame, as a hawk is in a cloth; quoting from R. Holmes, *Academy of Armory and Blazon*, "Mail a hawk is to wrap her up in a handkerchief or other cloth, that she may not be able to stir her wings or to struggle."

Dr. Madden also shows that Henry IV. probably borrowed a phrase from the

hawking language when he thus addressed his son —

> God pardon thee! yet let me wonder, Harry,
> At thy affections, which do hold a wing
> Quite from the flight of all thy ancestors.

So did Katherine in her retort:

> PET. Should be! should—buzz?
> KATH. Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.
> PET. O slow-winged turtle! shall a buzzard take thee?

Thus in *Twelfth Night*, Olivia contrasts "a wise man's art" with the "kind of wit" displayed by the random jester, who must needs, like the untrained hawk, "check at every feather that comes before his eye," instead of selecting a legitimate object of pursuit, and steadily following it to the end.

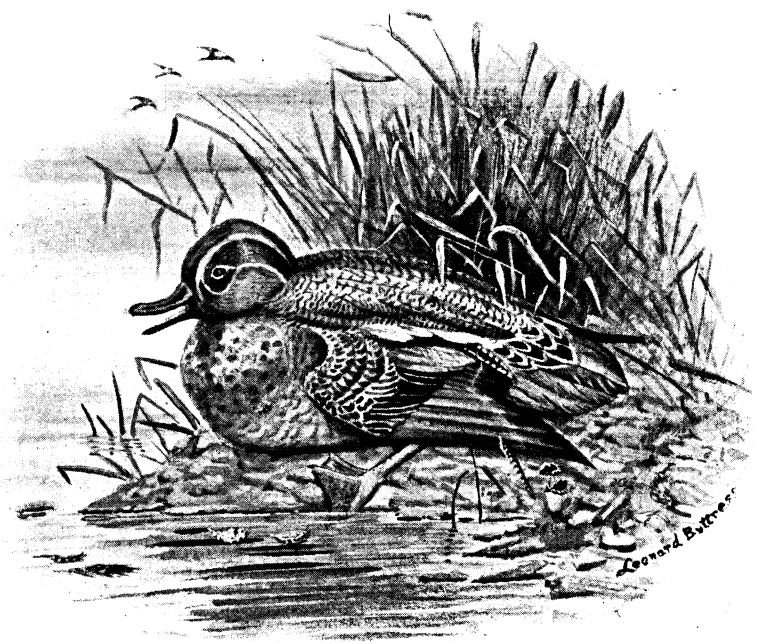
This idea, borrowed from falconry, was present to the mind of the King when he said to Hamlet—

> If he be now return'd
> As checking at his voyage, and that he means
> No more to undertake it, I will work him
> To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
> Under the which he cannot choose but fall.

Another bird trained for sport in his day was the "insatiate cormorant," which was taught to take fish, as it is to this day in China. During the poet's lifetime, King James I. frequently indulged in the sport, and created a new office under the title of "Master of the Royal Cormorants."

Lastly we come to "Jove's bird," "the princely eagle," of which mention is made quite thirty times. In connection with "The king of birds" it is pleasing to note that Shakespeare has not overlooked the ancient idea, related by Pliny, that the eagle of all birds can gaze at the sun without blinking.

> Nay, if thou be that princely eagle's bird,
> Shew thy descent by gazing 'gainst the sun.



"ALAS! POOR, HURT FOWL, NOW WILL HE CREEP INTO SEDGES."

Much Ado About Nothing.—Act ii., Scene 1.

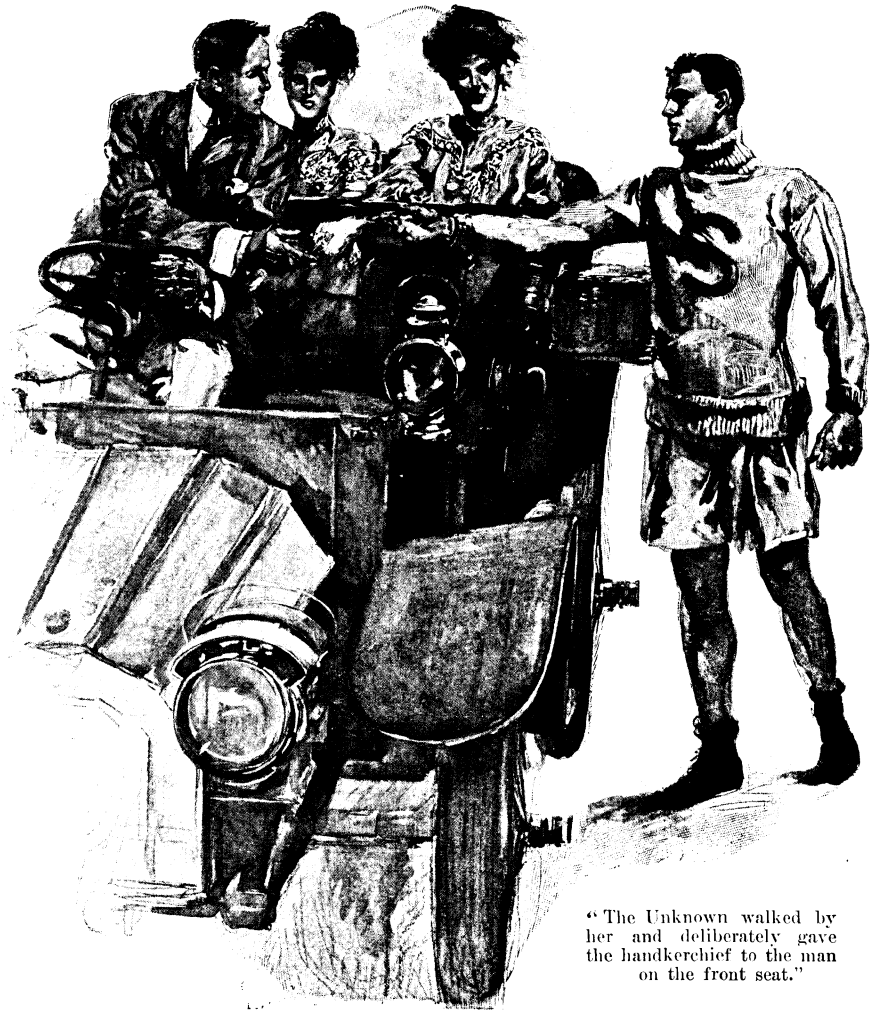
But enough has probably been said to vindicate Shakespeare's position as a field-naturalist of no mean order, and to indicate of what great service this Nature-knowledge was to him in his work. We have rambled with him "in the spring time, when birds do sing," and we have watched with him while "birds sit brooding in the snow," and so we turn to the last lines in our "Shakespeare": the threne or dirge to the phœnix and the turtle—

> To this urn let those repair
> That are either true or fair;
> For these dead birds sigh a prayer.



"AND THE WINTER SHALL COME." BY FRANK SPENLOVE SPENLOVE.

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"The Unknown walked by her and deliberately gave the handkerchief to the man on the front seat."

THE UNKNOWN

BY H. R. DURANT.

THE hot August sun had burned the surface of the shell road into a fine, scorching powder. A puff of heated air blew this dust up into the faces of two men who were going along the road at a rather rapid gait. One rode a bicycle; the other jogged beside him in a manner denoting suppleness and strength. The foot-farer had an appearance so striking that one, upon gazing at him, would immediately take a second look. He was nearly six feet tall, broad of shoulder, thick of neck, and spare of limb, and with the smooth face of a young man that yet had something old about it. It was a strong face, lightened by deep-set, clear blue eyes, and terminating in a chin of such goodly proportion that many of his adversaries called it a "mark," and yet failed to find it with the punch necessary to "put him away." He was a prizefighter out for his morning run with his trainer.

"Red" Kelley had trained scores of fighters, and his fiery, close-cropped hair and pug face had adorned many a ringside; and

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yet he had never handled a real world's champion. Ah, but he had one now! His present charge had fought his way with almost lightning rapidity to the front rank in the past year, and in the twelve contests, the last four of which had been under Red's experienced eye, had "won out the meal tickets for the stable with a right-arm jolt," as Red tersely expressed it. Kelley first saw him in a ten-round preliminary at the National Club with "Kid" O'Brien, a famous "trial horse." In the second round, the right went to the Kid's jaw, and it was all over. Kelley lost no time in looking up the man with the punch. He learned that the winner was an undefeated Unknown from somewhere in the West. Kelley was "next" to a wealthy politician who patronised the ring, and the trainer lost no time in telling his patron of The Unknown. The next day they hunted up the new fighter, closed business arrangements with him, and from that time to the present he had fought his matches under Red's management, the financial backing being furnished by the politician.

Of the fighter, his backers learned absolutely nothing. When he did speak, it was in words different from anything to which they had ever listened outside of a theatre, and all they ever got from him in regard to himself was that he had agreed to fight for them and that he would do so. "And," he added shortly, with a look at Red which gave that worthy a creepy feeling, "with me this is purely a matter of business; and as long as you keep your end of the bargain, I shall do likewise. I hate prizefighting and its environment of crooked politicians, State-prison candidates, and loafers, and the duration of my connection with you is governed entirely by my financial condition. Who I am or where I came from is none of your business, and please be good enough to remember this." To which Red simply said: "Yes, sir." Afterward he told his political friend all about it, and when he had described as best as he could what The Unknown had said, stuck out his chin, extended one hand, palm downward, and asked: "Now, what do you think of that, eh?"

"Kelley's Unknown" fought his way steadily forward, and here he was at last, after weeks of newspaper wrangling and prize-ring diplomacy, matched to box Charley Ryan, the middleweight champion of the day. The match had been made for "one hundred and fifty-eight pounds, weigh in at the ringside, for a purse of ten thousand dollars, winner take all, and also the picture privileges, for the middleweight championship"—according to the articles of agreement.

Kelley had brought The Unknown to this spot on the southern coast of Long Island because Ocean View was but a short distance from New York, where the fight was to take place, and because its good air, fine bathing, and smooth roads were excellent for training purposes. For the past week Kelley and his "stable," as the retinue of rubbers and "work-out" boxers are known to the devotees of pugilism, had been at Ocean View. The training quarters were situated half a mile from the summer colony, and the fact that a prizefighter and his handlers were domiciled within this distance of the wealthy summer visitors did not bring Captain Hand, the owner of the property, into very strong favour with them.

Men have to train, no matter what the temperature may be, and the road work seemed unusually long to Kelley this morning. He thought it was the hardest of all their ten-mile runs; but if it was arduous to The Unknown, he gave no sign. Kelley kept up a running fire of comment and advice, which was answered by an occasional nod of the head, but nothing more.

A motor-car came along with a roar and then whizzed by, leaving clouds of dust to mark its passing. The Unknown noticed that it contained a man and two girls, one of whom, in the fleeting glimpse he obtained of her, appeared to be strikingly beautiful.

"Tom Jordan and the two daughters of old man Brown, who made his money in Wall Street," said Kelley briefly. "Whew, but it's sufferin' hot! You was a sucker to sign for one hundred and fifty-eight at the ringside. He thinks he's got such a cinch that he'd 'a' taken you on at one hundred and sixty, and those two pounds mean all this sweat for nothin'. Come, Jonesey, hit her up; it's only a mile to the house." Soon after their first interview Kelley had asked The Unknown what his real name was, and, upon being told that it was Jones, had since called him "Jonesey."

They quickened their pace, and had gone but a short distance when they heard the chuck-a-chuck of a motor-car coming from behind, and upon turning around, The Unknown saw that it was the same party, but they were going much slower than before. He stopped and they passed on. Looking at the occupants of the car, he



"He looked at her again as he sat in his chair."

saw that all but the girl whom he had previously noticed, seemed unaware of his presence. She looked at him steadily, but with well-bred indifference. She was indeed very beautiful. A healthy outdoor life had marked her face with a rich tan, and her large brown eyes showed a depth of sweetness in her nature all foreign to the cool haughtiness with which she now surveyed the man in the road. The brisk run of the machine had blown her brown hair about in riotous confusion, and the absence of a hat showed a wealth of it. Did she gaze at him in an attempt at subjugation? Strong in the power of her beauty, and with a fascination untold, she still looked, and then—her eyes fell before his. Her face changed colour slightly, and she raised a hand to her head to arrange her hair. The next instant something white fell from the car to the road, and when he reached it he saw it was a handkerchief. He picked it up, and the girl said: "Oh, Mr. Jordan, please wait; I have dropped my handkerchief." As the machine stopped she added: "No, don't get out. This man has it and will bring it to me."

The Unknown approached, and it seemed as if he would. The girl extended her hand, and their eyes met again, but, after an instant's pause, The Unknown walked by her and deliberately gave the handkerchief to the man on the front seat, who took it from him.

The girl stiffened perceptibly, bit her lip in vexation, and, as The Unknown started away, she called out: "Here, sir!" and he paused. "This fellow's civility deserves a reward," she continued, and, nervously opening her purse, took out a coin hastily and tossed it at his feet in the dust. He picked it up and saluted respectfully, but his eyes were smiling at her mockingly. She turned her back to him, spoke to the man, and as the car moved away, the other girl exclaimed: "Why, Nan, how absurd to allow yourself to feel in any way what that common fellow did! Your face is positively red."

Kelley had continued on his wheel for some distance, and now stood waiting for The Unknown to come up with him.

"What's doin', Jonesey?" he asked.

"Nothing much," replied the other, with a far-away look in his eyes. "See what I earned by picking up a handkerchief!" and he displayed the coin.

"Hoi, yoi! a five-tollar golt vun!" exclaimed his trainer. "Say, but they're rotten. But maybe she made a mistake."

"I guess she did," said The Unknown thoughtfully, and he added: "Two of them."

Early the next morning The Unknown appeared in his bathing-suit, and running down the little wharf, dived smoothly into the water. When he came up, he turned on his back and saw Kelley standing in the doorway.

"I may go as far as Sentinel Rock," he called out. "It looks squally, and if it comes up rough, I'll go ashore and walk back."

Sentinel Rock rose from the water directly in front of the settlement proper of Ocean View. It lay about two hundred yards off shore, and was a favourite objective point for the stronger swimmers.

"A good place to dive," he thought, "and a nice little swim from there to shore." As he approached the rock he turned towards the beach, and then suddenly stopped and began to tread water. What he saw was a girl swimming with short strokes. Now and then she turned and floated on her back, evidently resting. At intervals a large wave broke over her, and, as he swam rapidly towards her, he could see that she was making little progress. She did not see him until he was within a few feet of her, and when he asked her if she needed assistance, she looked at him an instant and then shook her head. He had recognised her immediately as the girl who had tossed the money at his feet the day before, and he saw that she remembered him. For a few feet he swam silently by her side. Evidently her destination was Sentinel Rock, which was now fifty feet away, but The Unknown knew by her actions that she was very tired.

"Put your hand on my shoulder," he said, and mechanically she obeyed. In this way they reached the lee of the rock, and he assisted her on it. She was completely exhausted, and he waited for her to recover.

"Your presence was very fortunate for me," she finally said, "and I am very grateful for your help. It seemed to grow rough all in a moment, and I was too far out to turn back when I found myself growing tired. I take this swim generally in the morning before breakfast, but there is usually someone with me."

Yesterday she was haughty, strong in her beauty and conscious of her power; but

to-day there was naught but gratitude in her glance and embarrassment in her manner.

"I am glad that I was here," he replied. "I'll help you back when you feel strong enough."

"If you would be so good," she answered, smiling at him rather mischievously; and then, after a pause, during which The Unknown refused to meet her glance, she said: "I am Miss Brown, and perhaps you will find time to look me up soon."

"Yes, thank you," he said, flushing slightly. "My name is William Jones; I am staying down the beach."

"I noticed the 'S' on your jersey yesterday. I have never before seen that initial on that colour."

He eyed her searchingly for an instant, and his face grew a duller red as he answered: "I graduated from Stanford University."

"What special prowess won the 'S'?" she asked.

"Football."

"Of course. How stupid of me! That is what you were training for yesterday, wasn't it?"

"I hope you will pardon me, Miss Brown, but really we ought to go back," he said.

They slid into the water, and at his suggestion she placed a hand on each shoulder. She forgot everything in her admiration for the speed he displayed in going through the water and in the workings of the muscles of his shoulders, which felt like cords of steel beneath her hands. They scrambled through the surf, up out of reach of the foam, and extending her hand, the girl said: "Don't you think you were rude to me yesterday?"

The Unknown held her hand for an instant, and she noticed his melancholy manner. His eyes looked into hers, but he seemed to see something far away. In spite of herself, she waited for his answer in suspense, fascinated by his vague resentment, and withal conscious of a tingling of shame.

"Perhaps I was; but I thought you were simply trying to override me, and I resented it," he replied gloomily.

"Well," she hastened to say, "everything seemed so peculiar. I am sorry I tried to humiliate you, because, in spite of your appearance, I thought you were—well—different from the man with you, who was such a queer-looking person."

Again his face reddened, and she continued in a confused manner. "But you will drop in soon, will you not, and allow father to thank you personally for your kindness this morning?"

"Yes, very soon, I hope, and until then, good-bye," he said gently.

One evening a week later, Kelley said to The Unknown: "The air is good and cool to-night, Jonesey, and you'd better take a walk before you go to bed." When he stepped outside, it was dark. Out on the bar the swish-swash, swish-swash of the waves droned monotonously, but all other sounds were hushed. He walked rapidly, with his eyes on the ground, but came to himself suddenly as he rounded the point, when he heard the faint sound of music. The Surf House, which was the principal hotel, was ablaze with light. As The Unknown drew near, the music resolved itself into a dreamy waltz, and then he realised for the first time that it was the evening for the regular weekly hop at the hotel. For a moment he stood motionless, and then suddenly became aware that a figure was seated on a sand-dune within a few feet of him. It arose, and then something in the poise, he could not tell what, told him it was she. Going to her, he said—

"Is it you?"

"Yes," she answered in a low voice. "I have been watching you and wondering why you have not been to see me."

"I intended to," he replied, "but business matters detained me. How is it you are not dancing?"

"The dance has just started," she answered. "It is the first number, and I wandered down here for a moment to get a breath of air. My card is full, and I suppose somebody will come for me directly."

She waited for him to speak, but he only bowed his head, conscious of the soft fire of her eyes on his hair, and mindful of the fact that she knew there was something about himself for him to explain, and that she was anxious to know—because she cared. The music rose and fell alluringly, and for an instant he had the mad desire to pick her up in his arms and carry her off—he knew not where.

Well—he drew a deep breath—he had put his hand to the plough; there must be no turning back. It was too late for subterfuge. He would not deceive further. Raising his head, he looked at her, and saw the appeal in her glance. What she saw in his eyes caused her to place a hand to her heart, as though suddenly startled, and she trembled like a leaf shaken by the wind.

In a voice low and intense he began: "There is something you should know——" But just then somebody ran down the steps from the hotel verandah, and a masculine voice called out—

"Oh, Miss Brown! I say, Miss Brown, are you out here?"

An instant later The Unknown glided away in the darkness, and she waited the coming of her partner, absolutely speechless. She was ashamed and proud, humiliated and happy, filled with wild rage at him and at herself, yet frightened withal. Without reason, or thought, or right, he had drawn her to him and deliberately kissed her, and she had—returned it.

The boxing contingent had converted Captain Hand's barn into a temporary gymnasium, where, after his morning run, The Unknown finished his first half of every day's work by punching the bag, tossing the big medicine-ball, working the chest-weights and wrist-machine, and skipping the rope, followed by a brisk rubbing down and a thorough massage treatment which left him with a voracious appetite for his midday meal. In the afternoon he limbered up on the punching-bag, and then boxed four rounds with each of the three "work-out" boxers in the "stable." After this he was at liberty to take a walk, fish, go sailing, or amuse himself in any way he chose.

One afternoon, a week after the dance at the Surf House, as The Unknown and Andy Johnson were putting on the well-worn five-ounce gloves for the first bout, Kelley suddenly appeared and said: "Say, fellers, there's a swell mob outside from down the beach waitin' for you to get into some clothes before they comes in. They want to see you box, and they'll be inside as soon as the doors open. Andy, you'll have to put on your glad rags, 'cause they won't stand for nothin' but a Bowery grin. I guess that bathin'-suit of yours 'll do you, Jonesey." Then, going up to The Unknown and eyeing him for an instant searchingly, he continued: "You look kinder white. I hope you ain't gittin' too fine. Do you feel good? You want to do your prettiest to-day, 'cause that girl that gave you the five dollars is in the party, and she's entitled to a ring seat."

The Unknown turned abruptly and grasped the wrist-machine with a vigour which caused Kelley to remonstrate with him.

There were six in the visiting-party, three ladies and three men, and when they entered the barn, The Unknown and Johnson were boxing their first round. The pace was furious, and The Unknown danced in and out with the grace of a panther, rocking his opponent's head back with a straight left apparently whenever he desired, and then defending himself from the other's blows so cleverly that the men were immensely interested in the scene. As The Unknown side-stepped and got out of the way of one of Johnson's rushes, his eyes left the other boxer for an instant, and he saw her. The look of disgust and horror on her face told him plainer than words what she thought. Turning, sickly, to his work again, The Unknown tried a right swing, and missed by almost a foot. He heard her laugh, and this pulled him together. He looked at her again as he sat in his chair, and she gazed beyond him out of the open door into the background of marsh and fields. But he was beyond the sting of her indifference. Her laugh at his awkward move had goaded him, and now, manlike, he wanted to break something.

His eyes were nothing but two small slits when he moved to the centre of the floor for the third round, and then—Johnson lay flat on his back on the mat. There was a feminine cry of alarm, and The Unknown stepped back and waited for the fallen boxer to rise. He got up directly, and then with a rush went for The Unknown, who laughed sneeringly and beat him back without mercy. When time was called, poor Johnson was reeling about, and Kelley said to him—

"That'll be about all from you." He had ceased to worry about The Unknown's physical condition.

While Danny Slade was putting on the gloves and getting ready for the second work-out, Kelley told The Unknown that "The swells wants a knockdown to you," and he walked over to where the visitors stood. They noticed his ease of manner, and marvelled at his graceful acknowledgment of the introduction.

Jordan began: "You do not look like a prizefighter, Mr.—er——"

"Jones," said The Unknown, with just the flicker of a smile.

"Oh, yes; Jones," said Jordan, eyeing The Unknown critically.

"I guess that most fighters are bad enough," he replied; "but they are painted worse than they really are."

"Of course, you expect to win?"

"I know I shall win anything for which I set out," said The Unknown with

conviction, and his eyes rested for a moment upon Miss Brown.

"If I am not mistaken," she hastened to say, "you very kindly picked up my handkerchief for me on the Durham turnpike." And then she added patronisingly: "Oh, yes; I saw you once."

"I could not forget such a momentous occasion," he replied, and he added: "Oh, yes; I do remember meeting you *once*." At this she moved away with a shrug of her shoulders and began pushing the punching-bag back and forth in a most absent-minded manner.

A red mist seemed to float across The Unknown's vision, and when Kelley said: "All right, Jonesey, come on," he walked towards his new opponent with his calmness and good judgment thrown to the four winds of heaven.

There was much for the visitors to talk about as they wended their way homeward, but the girls did not realise that they probably had enjoyed the unique distinction of being the only members of the feminine sex to witness the complete knockout of two men within so few minutes. And the men never told them.



"The Unknown's chief backer was the portly politician."

The hard training was coming to a close. It was now three days before the championship battle, and The Unknown had not seen her since the visit to the training-quarters. Slipping on a coat, he walked rapidly from the house to the shore, and then along the beach in the direction of the cottages. A full moon hung over the ocean.

When he reached the cottage settlement, The Unknown took to the road and walked briskly along. In the Brown pavilion sat a girl with her arms on the railing and her face resting in her hands. Her eyes were seaward, looking out and beyond the moon's splendour. By her side was a Boston terrier, whose soft eyes and dejected attitude seemed to share the melancholy manner of his mistress. A growl from the dog gave warning of the approach of someone, and, looking down the road, she perceived a man coming along rapidly and apparently bent in her direction. The smart Panama hat and immaculate flannel suit were a strange attire for The Unknown, and she did not recognise him until he had crossed the walk and stood bareheaded before her. The girl arose with flashing eyes and started to speak, but he motioned her back to her seat and began—

"I shall not detain you long, but you must hear what I have to say."

"Must?"

"Yes. I have no explanation to offer for the prizefighter called The Unknown, but I want you to learn you were not mistaken in your opinion of me before you found out my present occupation. You know I am a prizefighter, you thought I must have been something else, and I want you to be sure that you were right in your opinion."

"I am sure you have never been anything but a prizefighter, and positive that you will never be anything else," she said contemptuously.

"Perhaps not, to you," he said; "but as this is probably the last time you will ever see me, I ask you to be fair, if not generous."

"You are very presumptuous," she said coolly. "Why should I care what you are now or what you think you are not? I do not choose to waste a single thought on you. Will you be good enough to go, or shall I call for someone?"

She turned her head away and, humming as though to herself, idly drummed upon the railing. Her studied indifference apparently was not noticed, for he continued—

"You know I am a college man and a gentleman."

"Absurd!"

"Yes, you do. I saw you looking at my society pin a moment since, and you know——"

"How dare you keep me here," she exclaimed with sudden heat, "and compel me to listen!"

"Because I want you to know that you are a school friend of my sister, and because you told her once you did not believe her brother guilty of a crime, and for that belief John Willard thanks you from the bottom of his heart."

"You—you—are Jack Willard?" she breathed, staring at him wildly, and then, recovering herself: "I don't believe you!"

"Two years ago," he continued hurriedly, "I was in business with dad"—his voice broke—"and a large sum of money was taken from the firm. My brother Will accused me, and I acknowledged it, which forced me to leave home. But Madge has told you. Well, in desperation I took up this, hiding my identity, forgetting my friends and forgotten by them, and seeking money this way. I was the amateur champion on the Coast, and the rest has been easy. I felt I must tell you this, because your—your—interest in me was not altogether misplaced, because—could I have had the opportunity of meeting you the same as other men, things——"

"It is useless," she said. "It is simply what you are. Of course, I was familiar with the whole terrible story, but nobody thought you would ever come to this." He winced perceptibly. "I cannot understand why you do not return home and resume your former place."

He looked at her queerly, and she asked: "Did you not know your brother received an Army appointment several months ago, and confessed to having appropriated the money himself? Madge writes that your father has searched for you everywhere."

"No," he answered wearily; "I have not heard from Sis for a long time; but it doesn't matter now. As you say, it is what one is that counts, and I am a prizefighter. Well," he drew himself up, "I shall fight my last fight in two nights, and then, to battle with life in earnest. I want you to think kindly of me, and if you ever do remember me, I hope your recollection will be of a man who was glad to do you a small service when he could. Good-bye, Nan, and God bless you!"

At eight-thirty the clubhouse was filled with a sweltering mass of humanity. At nine o'clock it was announced to the five thousand sports outside who were clamouring to get in, that no more tickets would be sold, and from then until the winner was announced, the police were forced to labour hard in order to preserve order and protect the property of the club. Outside, the turbulent mob swayed back and forth, while, within, collars soon wilted and coats were immediately stripped off, irrespective of their owners' social status. The twenty-four-foot ring was fastened to a platform directly in the centre of the building. Surrounding the platform were boxes, the heads of the occupants being even with the platform floor and allowing those behind an unobstructed view of the arena. Next were the aisles, and then from them straight up to the roof of the huge, barnlike structure, on all four sides of the building, ran the seats of the common herd. The light which beats upon a throne was an early twilight compared with the white glare which descended to the mat from a myriad of arc-lights above the ring. The light was so fierce that the rest of the building seemed to be in total darkness, and the incessant lighting of matches by the smokers on the tiers of seats was like the flash of fireflies outside in the hot summer night. Occasionally an impatient spectator began a stamping of feet, and this was taken up by the rest, fairly shaking the big building and sounding like the roar of distant thunder.

Ryan came in with his handlers clustered about him, and made his way with difficulty down the aisle to his dressing-room. His appearance was the signal for a great cheer, and the spontaneous ovation showed him to be a pronounced favourite. As soon as he disappeared, the odds went to ten to six in his favour.

The Unknown's chief backer was the portly politician. He was there in all his magnificent splendour, his silk hat in his hand, his overcoat on one arm, and in his mouth a big, black cigar which continually pointed to the roof. When ten to six was offered, and then two to one on Ryan, he yelled—

"Here, gimme some of that! It'll do for mine"—"You're on. I'll take that till the cows come home"—"No! no finger bets for me; show me the long green"—and then, after he had accepted all the bets in his vicinity, sat down and said hoarsely: "It's like stealin' candy from a kid."

Up from a box rose a man in evening clothes, and from a roll of money as big as a

piano-leg he began to strip off one-hundred-dollar bills and hand them to his commissioners, who placed them wherever a man wanted to bet on Ryan. It was Jordan, and, when he finally sat down, it was even money on The Unknown, with few takers, and the talent was nonplussed. The announcer shrieked from the two sides of the ring that both men had made the required weight, and then, to occupy the attention of the impatient throng, he announced the presence of different past and present pugilistic champions, who rose from the boxes in turn to receive royal homage.

While two youngsters were boxing a twelve-round preliminary, The Unknown came in and passed through the crowd almost unnoticed. He wore a smart serge suit, and, but for the critical glance which he gave the ring and the lights overhead, seemed unaware of his surroundings.

From the opposite corner of the building came a crowd of men with a bareheaded man in the centre. A deafening cheer arose, which soared to the beams overhead and then pounded back again to the floor. It lasted until Ryan made his way up the steps, through the ropes, and finally sat on his chair in his corner. He wore a white sweater and trousers, and a hundred arms were upraised to shake hands with the champion.

A few moments later, from the other corner, came another crowd. Ten thousand curious eyes were focused on The Unknown, but few applauded his appearance. Behind him was the faithful Kelley, with towels on his arm, a wooden pail filled with ice-water in which were the regulation sponge, lemons, and bottle of cold tea. When The Unknown stepped over the ropes, it was seen that he wore a dressing-gown, and from a rear seat somebody yelled: "Oh, mamma! Like Gussie in his little nightie!" which brought forth a shout of derisive laughter. The Unknown scraped his feet in the powdered resin, and then Ryan walked over and shook hands with him.

"May the best man win!" said Ryan.

"He will," answered The Unknown.

The tan-coloured gloves were placed upon a sheet of wrapping-paper in the centre of the ring, and from them Kelley and Ryan's trainer each selected a pair. The referee jumped into the ring. He was all business, from his shining bald head to his tennis-shoes. An instant later he said—

"All right, put on the mitts."

The Unknown reached into a pocket of his dressing-gown, and his hand came out closed over something which glittered when the light struck it. Unconcerned as the movement was, it did not escape Kelley's watchful eye, and, as The Unknown shoved the object under the bandage in the palm of his right hand, Kelley saw that the shining article was a five-dollar gold piece. Red said nothing, but he had a most peculiar expression on his face as he assisted The Unknown in drawing on the gloves. Kelley felt in his pocket for his piece of whalebone, his adhesive plaster, and his small bottle of ammonia. Then he drew off The Unknown's dressing-gown and held a cold sponge to the back of the latter's neck.

"Come on, boys," said the referee from the centre of the ring, and both fighters walked to him to receive final instructions. Not a sound could be heard in that great building. It was a tense moment. The throng had its first opportunity of comparing the two men. Ryan was the shorter of the two, and of broad and stocky build, with great knots of muscles on his brown back and shoulders, whereas The Unknown's skin, on his breast and thighs, was like polished marble. His muscles were long and sinewy. Ryan was the strong, rugged, heavy-jawed bull-dog; The Unknown the lithe tiger, with all that animal's powerful strength and beautiful grace. Considering physical appearances only, it was a cart-horse against a thoroughbred.

The ring was empty now, save for the referee and the two contestants, who stood in their respective corners awaiting the clang of the bell. You could hear a pin drop anywhere, and then—tung!—ah!—there was a sound as though many men had sighed in unison—the bell had struck.

"Keep away at first and kid him along," said Kelley, as The Unknown left his corner. Ryan wore a confident smile, and, as he sprang forward and backward and then sideways, with his head drawn between his shoulders, he looked every inch a champion. Suddenly he rushed, but The Unknown danced nimbly away, came back immediately and jabbed the champion's head with a lightning-like left. Twice did Ryan essay to rush, and twice was he stopped short with straight left-hand punches, but with little damage resulting.

For three years Ryan had been champion, and deemed invincible because of his ability to rush in upon his adversary, beat down his guard with an avalanche of fearful blows, and then knock him out at his pleasure. He

had never been knocked out or defeated in his life, and, from his ability to withstand punishment, might well have been called physically immune. The Unknown had been trained to fight him at long range, or, as Kelley expressed it—

"Feint him till he's tied in a knot; then, when he rushes, go to a clinch or leg it. Git him mad, an' he's yours."

Ryan showed his displeasure in the second round by scowling when The Unknown kept successfully ducking his swings and side-stepping his bull-like rushes. He was plainly nettled. Occasionally Ryan would corner his elusive antagonist, and then the latter would clinch and protect himself effectively in the break-away. To the great surprise of the multitude, The Unknown landed three hard, straight lefts, without a return, on Ryan's nose and mouth, slipping away easily from the champion's dangerous counters.

As he sat in his chair, Kelley said gleefully: "You got him bleedin' in the mouth. I seen him swallowin' it three times. He don't want you to have first blood or know you hurted him. Yes, see?" he whispered exultantly.

In the third round they fought harder, and during a slashing mix-up Ryan got home a hard right on The Unknown's left eye. Both were in fine condition, yet the fast work was shown in their hard breathing. The Unknown's stock had taken a big rise, and even money was now freely offered on him. Ryan had lost his confident expression, while The Unknown boxed on without a change of feature. His face was as expressionless as stone, and as he moved about, seemingly on steel springs, he was the typical fighting-machine. Up to this point he had not tried his right hand, but confined himself to jabbing and upper-cutting with the left. The old-timers were settling down to a long fight. Ryan's rushes were futile and he became exasperated.

"Stand up and fight!" he sneered.

"Hit me!" invited The Unknown mockingly, as he blocked two hard swings. The fighting was so fast that the great crowd was becoming wildly excited.

"You'll have a shiner, all right," said Kelley, when the third round was all over, as he washed the damaged eye, "but I guess she ain't goin' to close. Work the right to the body and git inside his punches. Shake him up. He's got a bad right. Watch it."

It was now the fourth round, and easily The Unknown's fight on points. They exchanged body blows, and both missed for the head. Ryan had stopped rushing and fought more warily. Suddenly he feinted with his left and then made as to step back. The move completely fooled The Unknown, who, thinking Ryan was about to retreat, went towards him, but Ryan stepped in instead and landed a right-arm jolt flush on the point of The Unknown's jaw. The blow did not travel over ten inches, but its force was terrific. The Unknown pitched forward, struck on his face on the floor, and lay motionless. The hush of death fell on the great throng. With a laugh Ryan turned and walked towards his corner of the ring. His seconds were shaking hands with each other jubilantly. Apparently it was all over. The referee began to count—

"One!"—"Two!"—

The Unknown feebly turned over on his back and opened his eyes wonderingly.

—"Three!"—"Four!"—

As he lay there, the electric lights overhead seemed to be a million blinding stars which shot off into space and back again to his head with the force of a trip-hammer.

—"Five!"—"Six!"—"Seven!"—

"Why," he thought, "how did I come to be lying down?"

—"Eight!"—

And then he heard Kelley's voice say hoarsely: "Jonesey! Jonesey! for Heaven's sake git up! Quick!"

Instantly he realised where he was. He rose to his knees.

—"Nine!"—

But he was on his feet before the fatal number had sounded.

A perfect bedlam of sounds rent the air. Men cursed and yelled with joy, hats and cushions went into the air, and a thousand voices roared to The Unknown: "Keep away! Stay back!" as Ryan went at him with the fierce viciousness of a bull-dog. Ryan did his best to finish him, but The Unknown clinched and clinched again, staggered about like a drunken man, only to come back and cling to Ryan, holding on with mad desperation until the referee literally tore him away; and all the while Ryan was endeavouring with the ferocity of a madman to land one of his sledge-hammer blows where it would end the fight for good. The Unknown's brain was clear, but he had lost control of his body.

Another great roar arose as the bell clanged and The Unknown zigzagged to his corner. While Kelley scraped his tongue with the whalebone and then held the



"He was on his feet before the fatal number had sounded."

reviving ammonia to his nose, one second vigorously flapped a big towel at him, another second soused his head with ice-water, and still another rubbed his legs frantically. He was himself again in a few seconds, and then into his brain surged a mad desire to beat Ryan into a jelly. Caution and coolness left him with the speed of light, and in their place came the one insane idea that as soon as that bell sounded he would punch Ryan into an unrecognisable mass. Again before his eyes floated a red mist, enveloping and covering all except Ryan's Celtic face, which leered out at him.

"Keep away from him this round, Jonesey, for the love of Heaven!" said Kelley, "and lay up till you git over bein' groggy. You'll beat him yet, if you keep cool."

"Keep away nothing," almost hissed The Unknown; "I'll lick him in this round, or he'll lick me."

"What!" gasped Kelley; "don't you want to win the championship?"

"To blazes with the championship!" cried The Unknown, and the bell rang for the call of time.

He met Ryan's opening rush with an awful right-hand punch full on the eye, and the champion stopped short as though hit with a club. Then, as The Unknown cut loose, the mob went frantic. Never was seen such a fight as this, and never was there such a whirlwind of blows as descended upon Ryan, who tried hard to retaliate in useless efforts. Ryan swung both hands time and again, tried all of the moves and blows of which he had been master, but at such times his opponent was not there, although back again instantly with his deadly left-hand jabs. Another jab, and Ryan wobbled unsteadily, partly dropping his hand.

"He's got him!" yelled the crowd.

Shaking his head, the champion plunged at his antagonist, who did not retreat now, but beat him back vengefully. Four times more that deadly left hand went to Ryan's head. Slowly his hands fell to his side, and then—thud !—a terrible right-arm swing hit his jaw with the force of a battering-ram, and then—flat on his back lay the ex-champion.

After a Turkish bath The Unknown returned to the hotel. It required two policemen to escort him through the cheering crowd into the safety of the hotel office. Once in bed, his mind dwelt continually on the incidents which had occurred at Ocean View. Yes, he was the champion, but what did it all matter now? He was almost sure that she had returned his kiss—bang, bang, bang !—and he awoke with a start to hear someone rapping on his door.

"The gentleman said this was a most important message, sir," said the awestruck bell-boy jerkily, as he watched The Unknown in wide-eyed adoration and then handed him a note. This is what he read—

HOLLAND HOUSE.

Come to me.

NAN.

Thursday morning.

An hour later John Willard's card was handed to Miss Brown. The answer was for him to come right up. He stood before her with his head in a whirl and heard her say—

"Mother and I came to town yesterday for a little shopping. We are going back—to-day—and we—that is—I—wanted to tell you that"—her face flushed hotly—"I—am glad—you—won."

Her lips were tremulous, and she unclasped her hands nervously. Her eyes fell. He went to her, and, laying his hands on her shoulders, turned her more directly to the light, so that she was forced to look into his eyes.

"Speak," he said in a low voice. He had grown very white. She did not answer.

"Will you tell me?" he asked in a voice she knew to be a command, even though there was a world of doubt and anguish in his tone. She was unnerved by the situation with the thoughts of what she had done, and by his almost desperate manner, and then, covering her face with her hands, she burst into tears.

"Oh, yes, *yes, yes!*" she cried wildly. It was a vague answer, but the only one he required. He folded her within his strong arms and held her close until her sobs ceased.

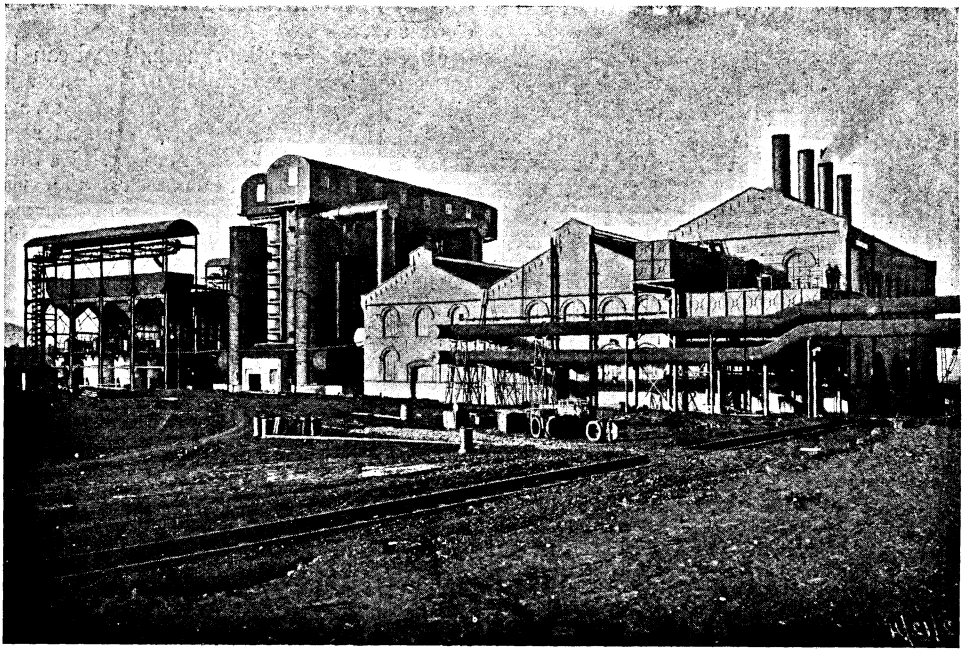
* * * * *

That afternoon, as the California limited express left Jersey City, some of the passengers in one of the Pullman coaches came to the correct conclusion that two of their number were a bridal couple. The groom had a black eye.

AN IDLER'S CONFESSION.

ANOTHER summer wasted, gone,
And I an idler looking on!
From all the world's vast harvesting
I garnered up not anything.
And yet methinks I may demur
A bit, a little to aver:
I sundry times was neighboursome,
And killed an hour with a chum;
Mended a heart another'd broken,
Kept still the while I might have spoken;
Lost one sweetheart in finding two,
And to a dozen more proved true;
Rode with the rich, walked with the poor,
And lost the key to my own door.
I shunned the knave, talked with the fool,
And found the whole wide world a school;
Bade an old love a sad good-bye,
(Would hearts were mended with a sigh!)
And, turning, much to my surprise,
Found a new love in two new eyes.
But summer's gone; this worded brief
Is just a playful hint of grief.

LEE FAIRCHILD.



THE MOND FUEL-GAS WORKS AT DUDLEY PORT.

On the extreme left is seen the chain lift which automatically feeds the coal from the barges to the furnace hoppers. To the right stand the towers which take the heat from the gas and restore it to the saturated air which is blown through the furnaces. At the back stand the acid tower and the cleaners. Then there is the building where the ammonia sulphate is recovered and where the gas is compressed into the great supply pipes.

INVISIBLE FUEL.

BY MARK BARR.

AS I looked at the blackened fields of Stafford, with its furnaces, glowing iron, and rush of steam, I remembered Poe's condemnation of Science—

> Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
> And drawn the Hamadryad from the wood?
>
> * * * * *
>
> Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
> The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
> The summer dream beneath the Tamariud tree?

But I began to picture the past ages when the trees of carboniferous forest grew. Think of that Stafford! What then was the Hamadryad to the dull creatures of no mind? Where was Man in an undeveloped world? If no green fields were torn up and no flood turned to the uses of development—what then? The fern trees had changed to coal as their natural function, and I realised the wonders and beauties of life now made possible by their ultimate use. Use! Why do we turn from the realities of Nature and make-believe in a green world of no facilities? Because we are small. Because we are inconsistent. We gladly adopt new facilities and we cry for more. We should lose ten thousand cherished things were it not for the coal and the metals and the wheels of Stafford.

I believe that all things in the world are equally interesting if one knows them equally. Some things are so easy to know and others so difficult that we do not see the coincidence of all objective human expression. We like great pictures of the black world of work and of struggle, though we do not like the black world itself. That is because the skill of the painter pleases us, and because the pictures interpret for us strong relationships such as we feel in music or any other work of art. But go to Stafford itself; learn much more than you know now of its inner meaning. Then you will understand the pleasure of a great skill,

and you will be moved by what I call the strong relationships.

The planet Mars distributes water from the poles by great canals. But far more interesting is the distribution of Power on the earth. Even in the old way, when coal was cut and used near to the pit's mouth, there was much to interest one: the sun's heat having shone, ages ago, upon the gigantic fern trees, was now, from the coal, being converted into steam and then into motion for machinery. When one saw the spinning and weaving of fabrics, one saw the re-combination of things long ago made together by Nature. The fibre cells were developed by generations of sunshine, seeds appearing to be but the unfolding of an infinite and immortal series of structures; and the high speed of the spindle and the loom was actually the liberated sunlight long locked up in the earth by the leaves and branches of the ancient coal trees. Even in the old way, which still keeps Stafford black, the making of iron, of steel, and of porcelain into a thousand forms moved one to think of the fuel that makes such things possible.

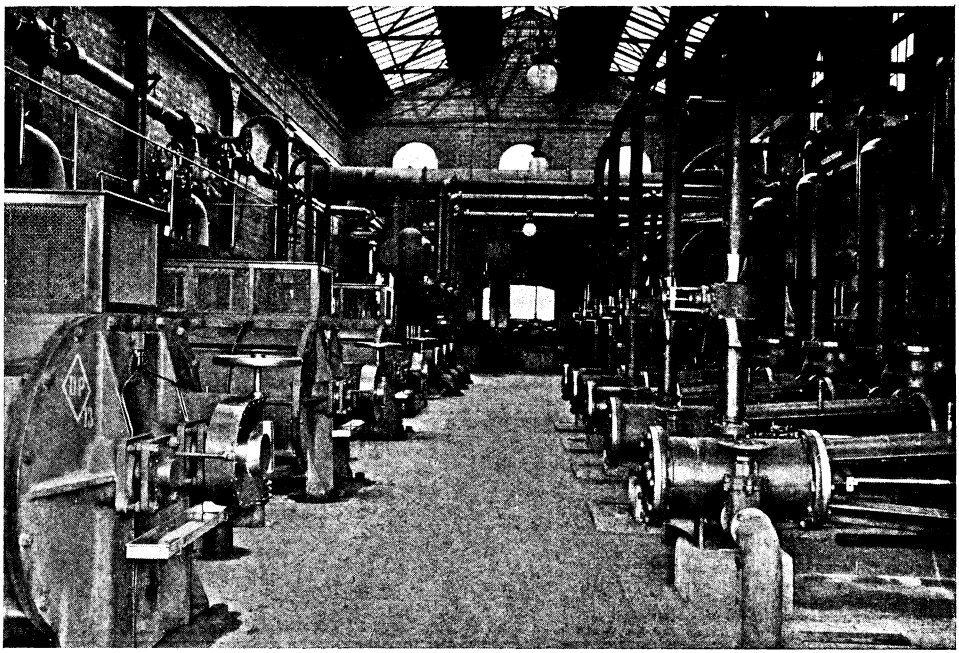
But Stafford and all the Black Country is going to be smokeless. The day is coming when the energy of coal will be distributed over the hundreds of miles of industrial country in two invisible forms—fuel-gas and electricity.

It has long been known that coal can be converted to a gas suitable for heat and power; but it is only to-day that we have a method of producing the invisible fuel at a price which makes it pay in competition with unconverted coal. Fifty years ago Sir Werner Siemens used a fuel-gas in furnaces of clever design, but it was not then possible to make the gas inexpensively. In 1879, Dr. Ludwig Mond pointed out that if residues could be utilised, and if certain by-products could be made during the conversion of coal, it would be possible to devise an economical system of distribution to be worked on a large scale. It may be inconceivable to many readers that *any* scheme would enable us to make a fuel from coal which could compete with coal itself. But Dr. Mond has spent twenty-five years in perfecting his process, and to-day realises his dream in a practical and striking form.



THE COAL HOPPERS AND GAS FURNACES.

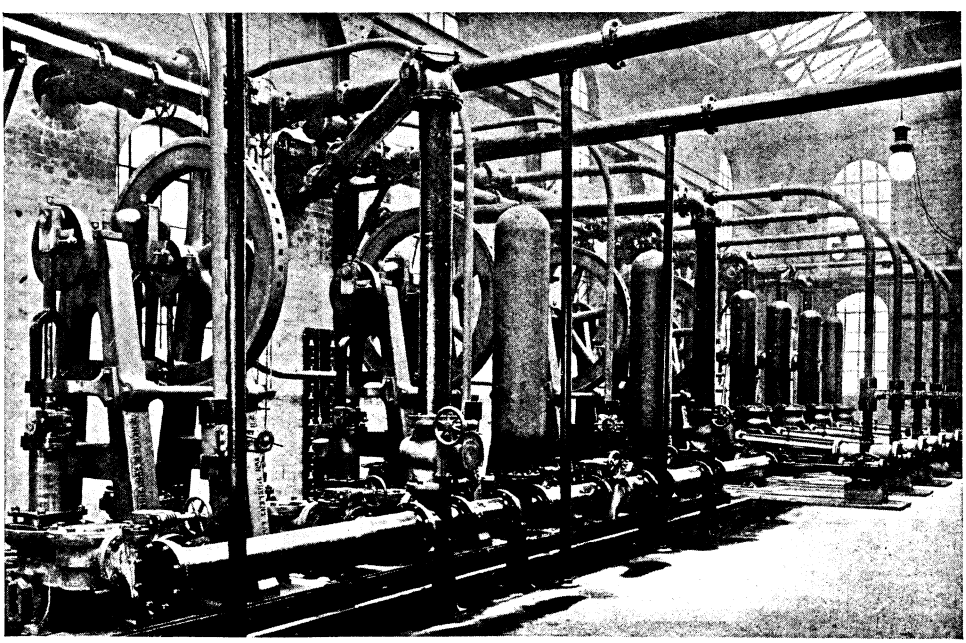
The ordinary illuminating gas is too expensive, and indeed chemically unsuitable in some ways, for power distribution on a large scale. And the small fuel-gas plants, which some works use, have disadvantages. Cost, in industrial work, is a complicated factor. Although coal may be cheaper than gas in a particular case, the uniformity of



THE AIR-BLAST ROOM.

To the left are the rotary blowers which drive the air to the heaters, where it meets the steam and is saturated for use in the gas furnaces.

output by gas-heat may well result in increased profit or in better manufacture. But convenience in handling and greater simplicity of management are other elements

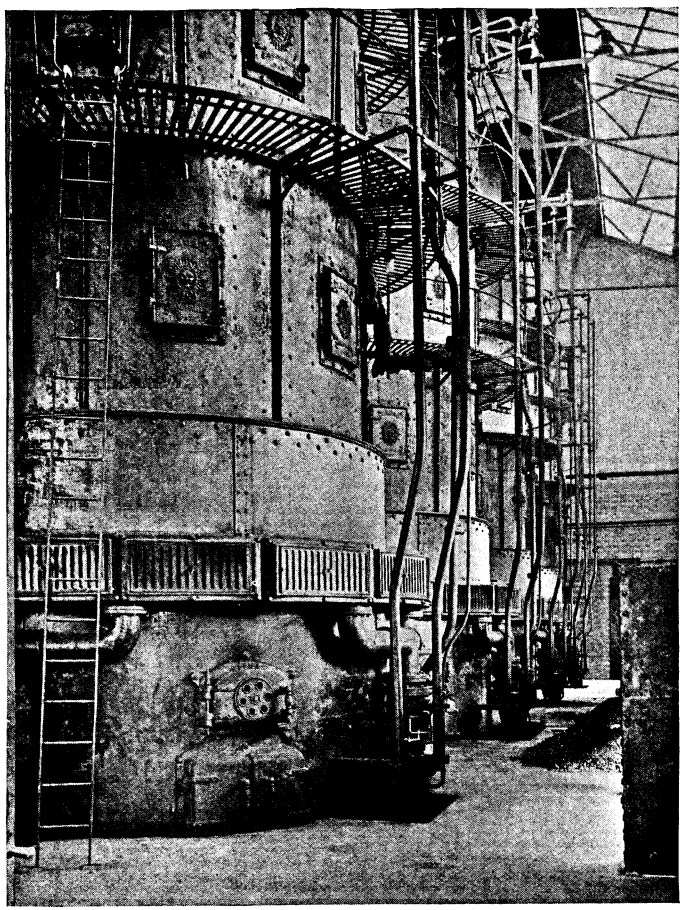


THE ACID PUMPS.

From this room the water and acid are pumped to the top of the acid tower, where the ammonia vapour of the coal-gas is converted into a fertiliser.

of ultimate cost. However, special pleading is no longer necessary. The Stafford large-scale distribution has primary financial advantages, and is at once cheaper than coal or small gas-plant firing, apart from the advantages in uniform working, convenience, and cleanliness.

The fuel-gas is made in the new central works at Dudley Port, where plans have been laid for the ultimate supply of fifty million cubic feet per day. The photographs give a good idea of the undertaking. Cheap coal is taken from barges alongside the works and fed intermittently by machinery into a series of furnace hoppers. The coal burns, not as it does in an open grate, but with a dull glow in sealed compartments. Warm air, saturated with steam, is blown upwards through the slow-burning coal, and this causes a gas to be formed which is itself combustible under the conditions of use. The gas contains some ash, soot, tar products, and ammonia. The waste of these in the old system makes the difference between questionable advantage and high efficiency. In the old system the temperature of combustion was so high that the valuable ammonia was decomposed. In Dr. Mond's process the warm gas first passes through a regenerator so arranged that it gives up part of its heat to a mixture of new air and steam which is on its way to the furnace just mentioned. In this way the heat is conserved, giving one the idea of perpetual motion. Then the gas passes through a washing-machine, where paddle-wheels churn up the vapour with water. This cleans the gas and further reduces its temperature. The gas then rises through a high tower filled with tiles laid to form a sort of honeycomb, where it meets a descending cascade of water slightly charged with sulphuric acid. The ammonia in the gas combines with the acid, forming solid sulphate of ammonia, which is carried to the bottom in solution. In this way a product of great value is obtained, and its sale *pays for the coal used.* The solution of sulphate is pumped over and over again through the tower and becomes more and more saturated; but the stronger solution is continuously drawn off at one end, while just enough fresh acid water is added at the other end to keep constant the volume of liquid in the tower. The gas having given up its ammonia, is next passed through the gas-cooling tower, where it meets a cascade of cold water, to which it gives its remaining



THE STEAM GENERATORS.

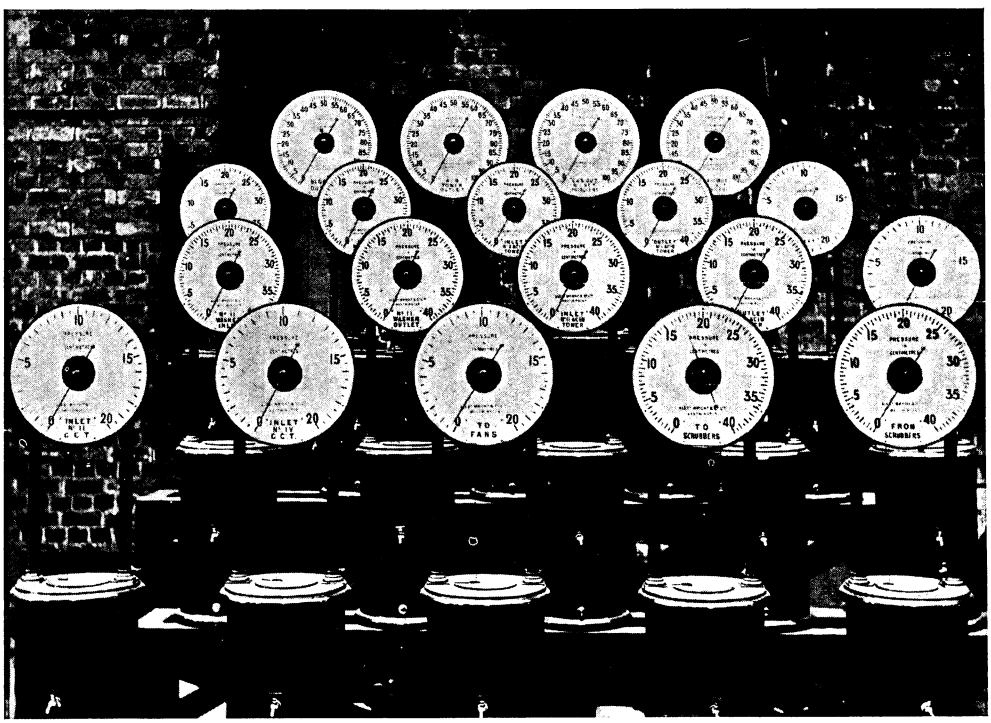
These are heated by a small fraction of the fuel-gas. By opening the slotted doors one can see the gas flames under the network of water pipes. There is no ash or smoke, and practically no attendance is required in this room.

heat. The water thus heated is pumped to the top of an air-heating tower, from which, after giving up the heat it received from the gas, it is pumped back to the gas-cooling tower. In this way, by extracting heat where cooling is necessary and by using that same heat to warm up the air required at the first stage of the process, great economy is attained and uniformity of working is made certain. The ammonium sulphate is obtained pure by evaporation; and in the form of powder it is shipped to farms, to be used as a fertiliser.

I went a few miles into the country where the sulphate is used, and was delighted to see the increased growth of vegetables. Again I thought of the ancient fern trees, and I wondered if Edgar Allan Poe could see the Elfin once more in this useful green aftermath!

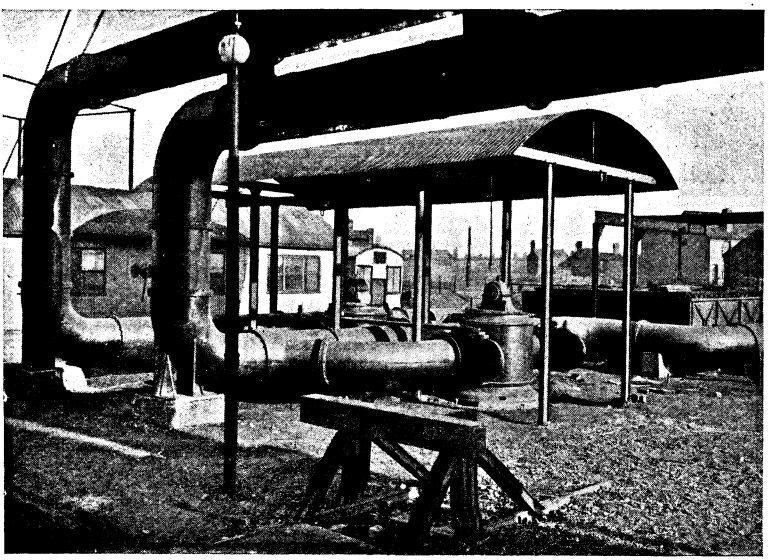
It is impossible to describe here the interesting details of the great plant at Dudley Port. The *thinking* machinery, which knows what to do with the coal and air and water and acid, and *when* to do it, is enthralling. The clean and cool gas is pumped through enormous meters, after which it goes through pipes to industrial centres four, five, and six miles away. I was glad that those meters were not in my kitchen, as they were showing 500,000 cubic feet of gas per hour. I was reminded, however, that the charge was only 1½*d.* per 1,000!

It is instructive to read what was said, eight years ago, when it was proposed to distribute fuel-gas over a large area. Obsessed with the idea that the greater heat-content in illuminating gas would cover the difference in cost, many critics pointed out that economical power distribution, having failed with ordinary gas, would fail with fuel-gas. In a discussion on a paper read before one of the scientific societies of the north in 1901, a prominent gas engineer prophesied that in our lifetime we should see the delivery of *illuminating* gas for power purposes *at so low a price as* 1*s. per* 1,000 *cubic feet.* But it was obvious, he thought, that the fuel-gas, containing less potential heat per cubic foot, could



THE PULSE OF THE SYSTEM.

These instruments are so arranged that an attendant may know exactly what is happening in any of the streams of air, steam, gas, or water, at any part of the plant. The attendant can telephone to men at the furnaces, at the towers, or in the pump-rooms.



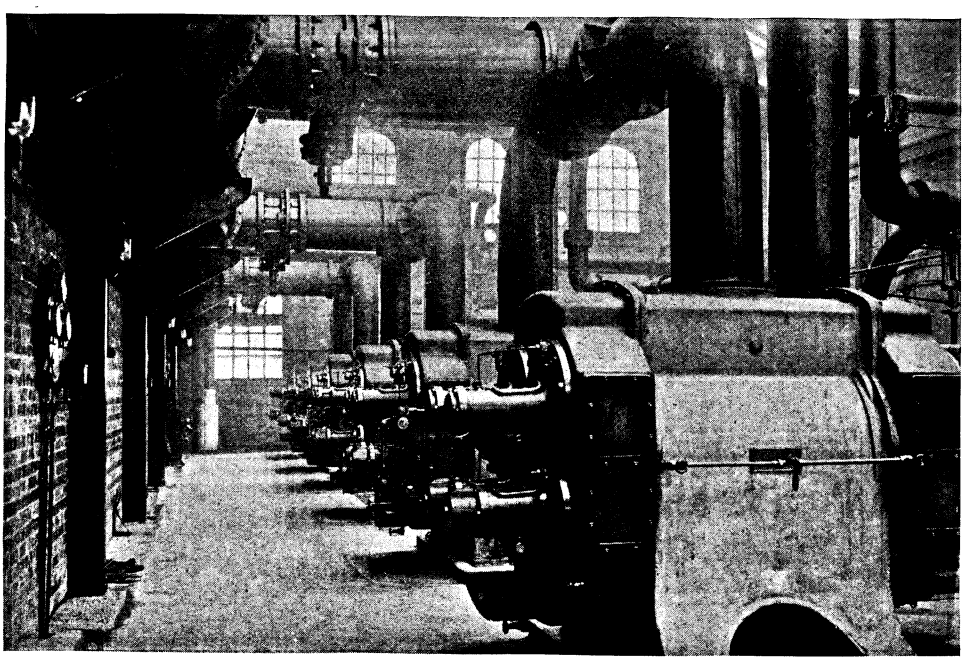
THE MAINS AND METERS.

Before entering the trenches which take the pipe mains in every direction for six or seven miles, the pipes conduct the gas through meters which measure correctly from ten cubic feet to one billion cubic feet. The unit pointer on these meters rotates at a high speed and shows the uniformity of the supply.

never reach so low a figure. The fact is that the Mond gas is now sold at 6*d. per* 4,000 *cubic feet.* That is, for the same potential heat the cost is *one eighth* the amount mentioned by the sceptical gas engineer eight years ago.

There are many situations in which the conservation of heat may result in such economy that the sale of the sulphate more than balances the cost of coal used. For example, where exhaust steam or steam raised by the waste heat of gas-engines is to be had, the sale of the sulphate gives a net profit on the operation. The following results were obtained in a large plant at Winnington, Cheshire—

1. Working producer furnaces, recovery and sulphate plant: Cost of handling coal, air, water, acid, sulphate, and residues. All wages, repairs, upkeep, etc., including administration, stores,



THE COMPRESSORS.

Here the gas, having been cleaned of its residues and cooled, is compressed into the pipe mains.

lighting, etc., per ton of coal made into gas-fuel . . . . . 3*s.* 6*d.*

2. Value of sulphate per ton of coal converted: taking 1 ton of sulphate per 25 tons of slack coal used . . . . 8*s.* 0*d.*

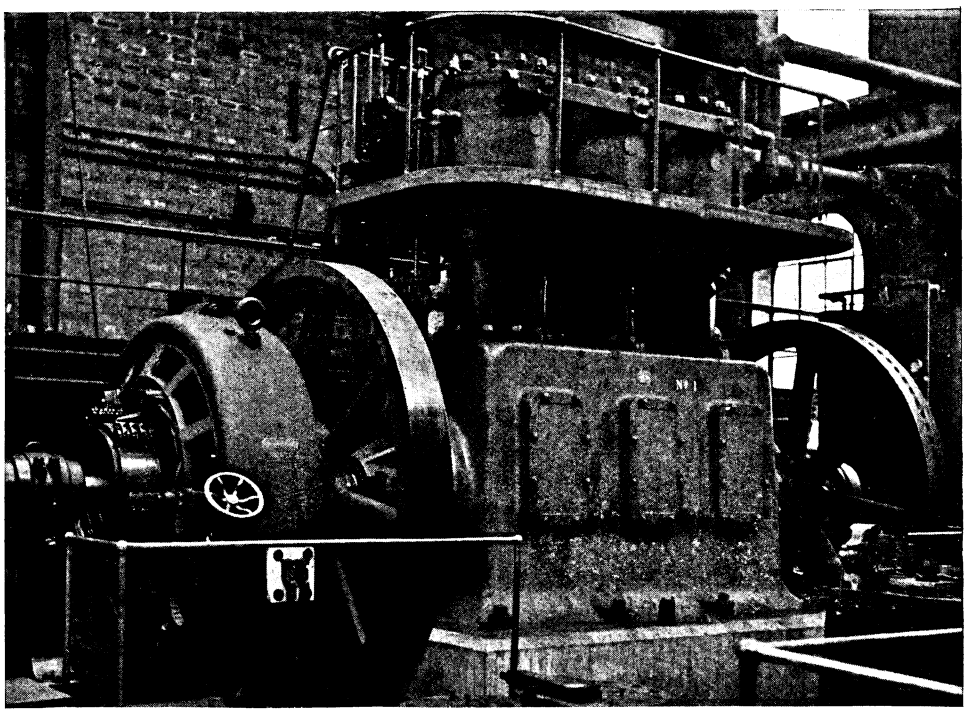
3. Profit due to sulphate (£10 per ton) recovered per ton of coal used . . 4*s.* 6*d.*

The net cost per cubic foot of gas diminishes rapidly as the plant is extended. There are many items of expense which remain constant with increased output. While the cost factors which are allocated to administration charges, amortisation, interest, insurance, etc., may, in a small plant, amount to more per cubic foot of gas than all other cost factors, they become insignificant in the large plant.

Much has been written in recent years about the use of natural water-power for the generation of electricity. It is true that in many cases the water costs nothing, and the prospect of free power is enthralling. But prime cost per annum is no simple item. Though the water supply may cost nothing, the actual cost of electrical power generated at the waterfall depends upon factors of upkeep, amortisation, interest on money, selling cost and other complex quantities. Coal is found in Nature just as water is found. The man who owns the land in either case, in one sense, gets the nucleus of power for nothing. The real question is one of ultimate cost which involves the factors mentioned.

Fuel-gas enables us to use engines which are in some ways more suited to the generation of electricity than water-power, when all details of working are considered. The amount of water passing over a precipice varies throughout the year, and in order to ensure a steady average supply, vast reservoirs must be built. On the other hand, coal may be accumulated and stored much more cheaply and in a smaller space.

The gas-engine gives double the power of a steam-engine for the same amount of heat energy. Therefore, even if the cost of



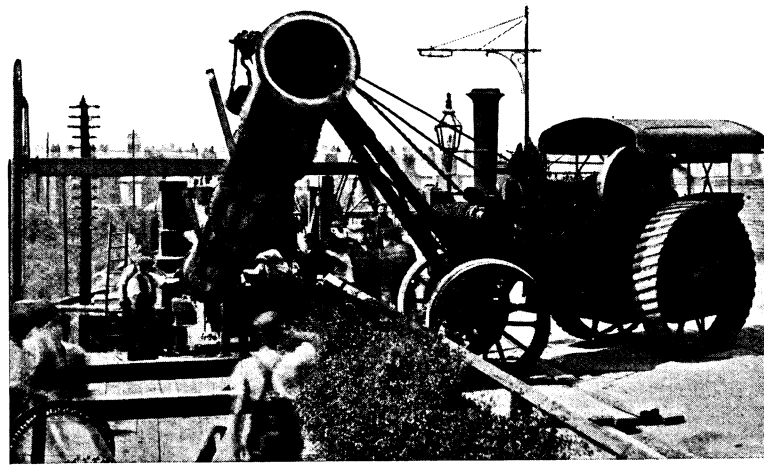
THE MODERN POWER GENERATOR.

This shows a direct connected dynamo and gas-engine operated by Mond gas at a distance of six miles from the works. The thermal efficiency of the engine is double that of steam-engines, and the floor space is probably only one fourth required by the steam-engine of older type. There is no boiler-house, no smoke, and no ash. The electricity generated by the dynamo is distributed to motors in all parts of the works where power is used as and when required, thus obviating the continuous running of dangerous shafting and belts and lessening noise and waste.

converting coal into gas were greater than it is, the gain in efficiency would make the new system desirable. But in the solving of these problems there is no task so great, so nearly the cause of despair, as the difficulty of convincing the people who are to be benefited. It is a strange perversity of human nature that, in worshipping reason, most men rejoice in condemning what they call theory. Let there be the smallest flaw in the specialist's statement, and the disciple of very common sense wishes to sweep away every vestige of the other's work and to replace the reasoning of a painstaking experimentalist by untrained analysis. With him whom Heaviside has dubbed the "Practician," reasoning is a mere exercise of the obsessions. The first rule is

A hatred of fangles and the . . . fooleries of his time,

and he treats all new things as fooleries.



LAYING THE PIPE LINES.

However, the educational effect of such an undertaking as the Stafford fuel-gas distribution is immense. Many difficulties were overcome by novel means, and those who had prophesied failure were amazed to see the vast network of leakless pipes laid through ground which is often shifting and sinking. Mr. Mepham Ferguson had invented a leakless steel pipe of great strength for the Coolgardie water supply, and he was consulted. He brought his plant and sheet steel to Dudley Port, and, before the prophets of failure had time to realise it, the pipes were made and laid and Mr. Mepham Ferguson was gone! And the pipes were not nine feet in diameter, as the prophets had said they would be. By distributing the gas under pressure, small pipes can be used. Yet there is no leak. The difficulties of compressing the enormous volume of gas were met in such a way that one attendant looks after the machinery. Rotary meters, capable of measuring 500,000 cubic feet of gas an hour, were devised; tools for tapping the mains while under pressure, without leak, were adopted; new instruments for testing efficiency, and pyrometers for automatically recording temperature, were supplied



PIPE LINE CROSSING A RAILWAY.



MAP SHOWING THE PRESENT SCHEME OF DISTRIBUTION OF FUEL-GAS.
THE WORKS ARE AT TIPTON, DUDLEY PORT STATION.

to users. In fact, scores of clever ideas were brought to practical success.

The manufacturers gradually learn what are the advantages of the smokeless and uniform fuel, and they slowly recognise that there is life in all branches of industrial method in England. The people should know what is being done. If, instead of reading thin pamphlets so that they may argue at home upon Free Trade and the dying industries (a subject that they would not dream of understanding were it not made political), the people could visit the centres of industry, they would feel content, and their silence would be golden.

I visited four great works six miles from Dudley Port, where all the power and heat was derived from the Mond gas. At Wednesbury the Corporation had been buying electricity in bulk (as the phrase goes) and converting the voltage for distribution in the town. The cost had been low, and the scheme had given good results. But now the town runs its own engines by gas from Dudley Port and makes its own electricity at a suitable voltage. The economy is high and the cost to consumers is lower than in many towns where coal is actually cheaper than that used at Dudley Port!

In Wolverhampton, over five miles from the Mond works, I saw in one room a 650 horse-power engine, two 250 and one 150 horse-power engines at work. These were generating electricity which operated motors a quarter of a mile away in a steel-rolling mill. But I was more interested in seeing

the manufacture of malleable iron castings by the use of the gas. Malleable iron castings, under perfect conditions, can be better than open hearth steel, except perhaps in extension or stretching quality. But there are overwhelming advantages in

Above the town of King te Ching—
A burning town, or seeming so—
Three thousand furnaces that glow
Incessantly, and fill the air
With smoke uprising gyre on gyre,
And painted by the lurid glare
Of jets and flashes of red fire.



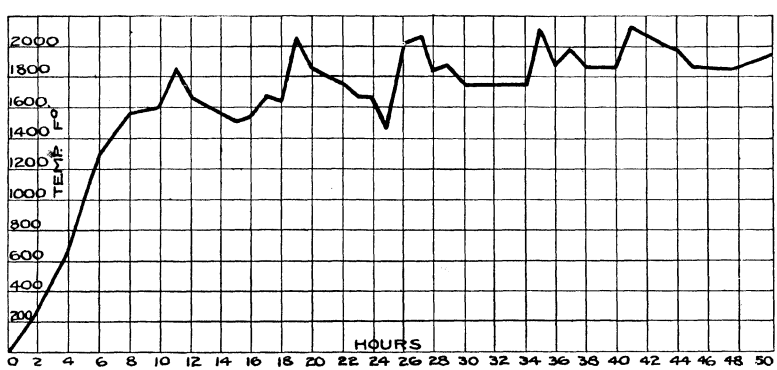
CHART SHOWING THE STEADINESS OF TEMPERATURE OBTAINED BY THE USE OF GAS.

The heavy line was automatically recorded by a pyrometer which was electrically connected with a distant furnace. The dotted line shows how the consumption of gas diminishes as the furnace heats up and finally reaches a steady minimum.

malleable castings where great stretching quality is not required, and where properties peculiar to these castings make them more desirable than steel. For example, such castings have no blow-holes (are not spongy) and their strength exceeds that of steel. Few, if any, foundries have been able to show a uniform output of perfect castings. This is only possible when chemical analyses are made daily, and when scientific methods are used throughout. But such methods are abortive when coal is used. Apart from the dreaded presence of sulphur in coal, there are the irregularities of temperature in coal-firing which render the output uncertain. I give two charts which show the steadiness of temperature obtained with the gas-fuel.

The use of the gas for enamelling and porcelain firing marks a still greater epoch. No more, I thought—

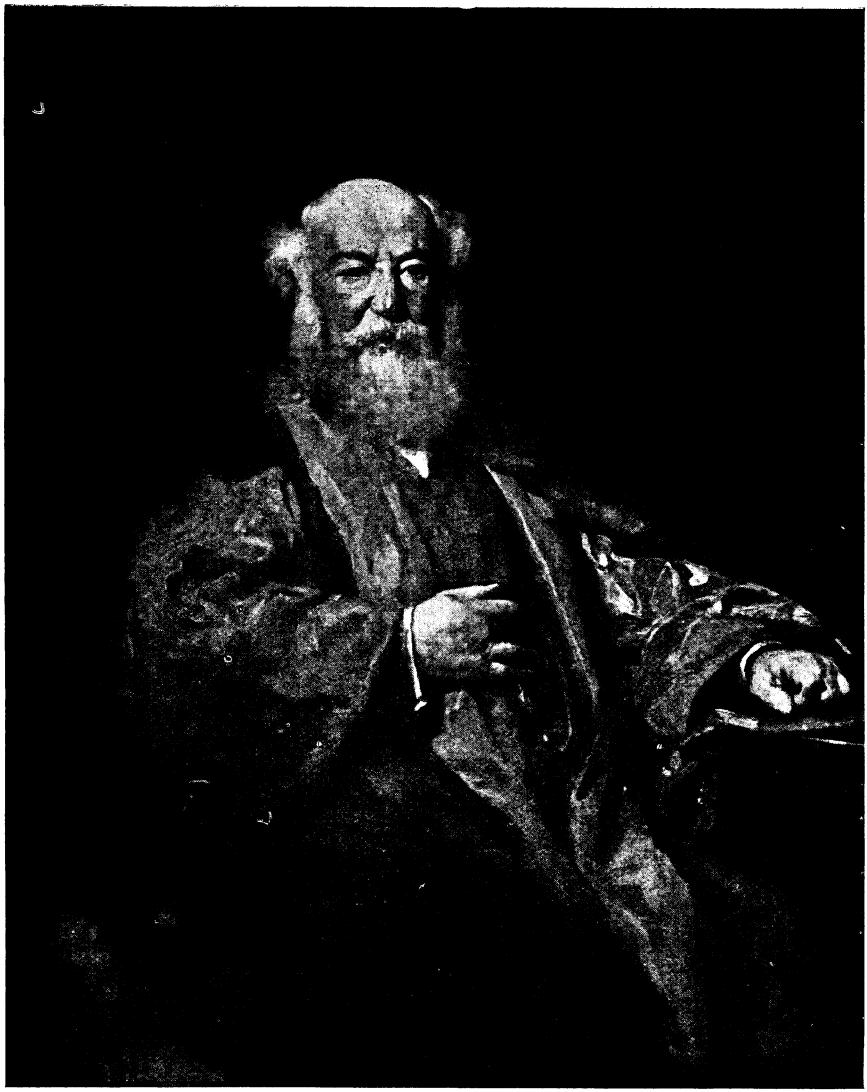
Some porcelain makers will tell you that old methods are best, but when one remembers the letters of Père d'Entrecolles and knows the ways of the inept West, one feels a contempt for the borrowed conservatism behind which there is no old art, but merely old prejudice. The Chinese, the only people in the world who knew how to make great porcelain, used their facilities with amazing insight, for it was not bad firing that made good porcelain. The discovery of the gorgeous *sang de bœuf* was due to a subtle observation of the reducing atmosphere in the furnace. It is the Westerner who tells you of subtle irregularities as if crookedness were, in itself, beautiful. The



PYROMETER RECORD OF A COAL-FIRED FURNACE.

The temperature would be still more irregular were it not for the constant attention of the stoker. As the heat never reaches a steady state, fuel is burnt uneconomically.

hand-made thing is charming when the irregularities stand as a writing which tells you how hard the workman tried to make it straight. The machine-made thing is ugly because there is no human writing. But if there is writing, it must be sincere.



LUDWIG MOND, LL.D., PH.D., F.R.S., F.I.C., F.C.S.

Member of the Accademia dei Lincei, Rome; Vice-President, Royal Institution; Vice-President, Chemical Society; Past President, Society of Chemical Industry; Past President, Chemical Section, British Association. From the portrait by Solomon J. Solomon, R.A.

This is not really a digression. The point is that uniform conditions for work improve it, and that no one in his senses wants to do away with beautiful handwork. I believe that if the right use were made of new facilities, handwork would improve.

When one sees great industrial systems in successful operation, it is easy to imagine that we are near to the millenium. We picture the efficient interworking of different parts in a vast community: the coal is used as it should be used; metals are worked in the right way and at the right place; spinning is done where the air is soft; ships are built in docks near to the materials needed; and railways connect up different places in a way undreamt of by our grandfathers. But alas! we are not near to the millenium. As we find artificial restraint in trade, so do we find archaic methods restraining the free use of great facilities. Because, as in the time of Queen Elizabeth, there are patents giving restricted leave to sell. However, prejudice dies in the end, though it dies hard.



A JUDGMENT OF PARIS

BY C. C. BELL

IF it be true that a story is meritorious in proportion to the trouble it has given to the writer, I do not consider that there is any necessity for an elaborate apology before introducing to your notice the following tale.

One may, either from a partiality to views or from a hot-headed passion for eminences, risk one's neck and shins by clambering up steep and ruinous spiral staircases. But one does not, for pleasure's sake, spend hours in a cramped position on the top of a castle tower, offering oneself a sport to the four draughts of heaven, unless one has in view some result more profitable than severe cold in the head.

One ascent of the tower of Castle Blaise would have sufficed me, had I not conceived an intense desire to make friends with the one-eyed Raven.

He came and perched on the little turret and looked at me with his head on one side, and said—

"I suppose you don't happen to have such a thing as a piece of cheese about you?"

I replied that I was truly sorry, but I really never carried cheese.

He looked a trifle disappointed.

"Oh, it really doesn't matter," he replied, in the tone of one whose life had been spent in the patient endurance of ingratitude; then, after a prolonged survey of the surrounding country, he again took up his parable.

"I was going to tell you a story. It begins: 'Once upon a time.'"

"Well?" I said, for I had become interested already.

But the one eye twinkled knowingly.

"I'll tell you the rest when you bring me that bit of cheese," and with that he flew away.

The next day I made my second ascent of the great tower, carrying in my pocket a piece of Cheddar, carefully wrapped in a sheet of notepaper.

The Raven was waiting for me on the top of the turret.

"Brought the cheese?" he queried anxiously.

I handed it to him. He took it in his bill, put it down, and looked at it critically.

"H'm, Cheddar. It isn't my favourite, but I'll pass it this time. Try and remember Stilton next time."

I undertook to make a note of it.

"Now, then," I said, "I hope you will tell me a little more of that interesting story with the extremely original beginning. Let me see, you began: 'Once upon a time.'"

"If you are going to poke fun at me and my story," quoth the Raven, and his one eye gleamed savagely, "I shall bid you a very good morning."

I hastened to assure him that I was not

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indulging in pleasantry at his expense, and that I was consumed with desire to hear his story.

"Very well," he said, considerably mollified, "then I will impart to you my story. My father told it to me, and his father told it to him, and his father—— "

"You mean," I said, "that it has been in your family for generations."

"Are you going to tell this story, or am I?" inquired the Raven crossly. "Because if you are, I may as well retire and eat my cheese without further ado."

I hastened to make an abject apology, which was accepted, inasmuch as he proceeded as follows :—

Once upon a time, this castle was the property of a king. He had married a most charming and accomplished lady, and they lived here most happily.

About fifteen months after their marriage, a little daughter was born to them. Although they had both set their hearts on a boy, they were, nevertheless, delighted with the girl, which was fortunate, since no power on earth could possibly have effected a change of sex for the child.

The inhabitants of the country were very pleasant about it. They would have liked a young prince, but the King gave such an admirable public dinner and display of fireworks to the better classes, that they waived their preference for an heir and hailed the advent of the little heiress with every possible evidence of decorous loyalty. As for the masses, the fountains ran wine for a whole fortnight. Consequently they were exuberant, though perhaps not quite so decorous in their expressions of delight. Well, things went very well until the little Princess was about a year old, when she began to show signs of a most unpleasant and quarrelsome nature.

Even at the early age of one and a half, she had earned for herself a most unenviable reputation. Her old nurse gave notice on grounds of incompatibility of temper. The Princess had scratched her face and pulled several handfuls of hair out of her head, which was extremely hard on the old woman, seeing that she had very little hair to lose.

So the King and Queen were compelled to obtain another nurse, who soon followed her predecessor's example and gave indignant notice.

Then came another, who remained in the Palace a fortnight. Her successor left the very same day as she arrived.

The King and Queen were very anxious and worried about all this. Moreover, as the little girl grew up, matters did not mend. She was hated, cordially and universally, on account of her insolent pride and heartless cruelty.

"Poor little Aphrodite!" said the good Queen, "I fear she will never be a nice girl, but we must hope the new little baby will grow up to be a consolation to us."

Alas! They were destined to be disappointed. Princess Juno was even worse than her elder sister, and when a third little Princess arrived and began to show the cloven hoof to an alarming extent, the poor King and his sweet consort entirely lost heart and went off on a pilgrimage.

Now, one cannot for a moment doubt that this was an extremely pious method of dealing with the difficulty, but, at the same time, one is bound to admit that there is a wide field for divergence of opinion as to whether, under the circumstances, a pilgrimage was the most practical course of action. At any rate, on their return, the royal parents found that their charming daughters had not been allowing the grass to grow under their feet during the parental absence.

They had abused and maltreated the servants to such an extent that these worthy and long-suffering officials had been compelled to barricade themselves up in the great tower until such time as their royal master should return from his pious wanderings.

It is not nice to find your house in a state of internal siege. The King remonstrated with his unruly offspring, but his gentle chiding produced but little result. The Princesses certainly consented to raise the siege of the great tower, but there was no visible improvement in their every-day behaviour.

Then another little Princess arrived. The King had a long and earnest consultation with his beloved Queen. They decided that there was only one thing to be done. They could never permit this little one to be infected by the terrible example of her sisters. She should be sent away before she was a day older, to be brought up in the forester's cottage, just as if she were one of his own children. She should never know that she was of royal birth, lest the very knowledge of the fact should mar her character, nor should she have any dealings with the Castle or its inhabitants until her twenty-first birthday.

Accordingly, with the assistance of the

Castle leech, a report was circulated that the baby Princess had died, and everybody said: "Well, after all, it seems quite a blessing in disguise, when one thinks of those three terrible girls." A funeral took place, and a waxen baby lay in state in the great hall, and was duly buried in the family vault, after which there was a public funeral feast, at which speeches were made and tears were shed in token of loyal sympathy with the Royal House in their sad and touching bereavement. (I quote the columns of the *Court Circular* of that day.)

But whilst these ceremonies were being enacted in and around the royal mausoleum, the little Princess Pasqualie was being rocked to sleep by the good wife in the forester's cottage.

The forester had accepted the charge of the baby on certain conditions. He demanded entire control over the little girl until the twenty-first birthday; and he respectfully exacted a promise from the King and Queen that they would not visit the child, nor in any way attempt to see her, during the time that she remained under his protection.

The parents hesitated at first, but, since the good man utterly declined to undertake the responsibility unless his conditions were accepted, they ultimately gave the required promise, in full confidence that their trust was not misplaced.

Now, the King was extremely wealthy. Moreover, in the absence of a male heir to the throne, it was evident that one of his daughters would eventually succeed him. Everyone dreaded such a catastrophe, but, for all that, there were not a few kings and dukes and princes who would have welcomed an alliance with their wealthy neighbour, and accordingly sent their sons on visits of state to the Castle, with a view to their securing the hand of one of the princesses in marriage. Whenever an eligible young man came to the Castle, great preparations were made to receive him. The King laid himself out to be singularly and obviously pleasant. He would say to the Queen—

"Really, my dear, I can imagine no more happy combination of circumstances than that young So-and-So should take a fancy to one of our dear children."

Her Majesty would sigh and say: "Yes, love," but she was gravely apprehensive as to the quality of bliss likely to overtake the man who wedded one of her daughters.

Her fears, however, though from one point of view extremely reasonable, were wholly unnecessary. Suitors came and went, but went *alone*. No one took a princess away from Castle Blaise. Something always happened. Either the Princesses smacked one another's faces in public or kicked the servants who waited at dinner.

The young men, of course, pretended not to notice anything amiss. They were gentlemen, and as such kept the unpleasant strictly to themselves. But, though they said nothing, their matrimonial aspirations received a chill from which they never recovered.

Now, there lived in one of the villages of this country a blacksmith. He was young and strong and extremely well-favoured. So handsome was he that all the ladies fell in love with him, and he did a roaring "while-you-wait" trade among the surrounding female aristocracy.

This young man gave it out among his friends and contemporaries that his purpose in life was neither more nor less than to wed the most beautiful woman in the kingdom. When he announced his intention in the room at the inn, a certain old wiseacre looked up from his pot of refreshment and said—

"May Heaven, then, have pity on you! for the three most beautiful women in the kingdom are the three Princesses."

The blacksmith, however, was not to be lightly discouraged. He immediately determined to lose no time in paying a visit to the royal Castle, much to the sorrow of his friends and relations, who implored him to reconsider his rash intention. But tears and prayers alike failed to move him from his purpose. He quietly saddled his horse and set off in the direction of the Castle Blaise.

At last he came to the Castle gate and knocked three times with the great iron knocker.

"What may be your business?" inquired the servant who opened the door.

"I have come to marry the most beautiful woman in the kingdom," replied the blacksmith fearlessly.

When the Princesses were informed that a blacksmith was waiting downstairs to marry the most beautiful woman in the kingdom, they all three shrieked with indignation.

"Skin him alive!" screamed the Princess Aphrodite.

"Boil him in oil!" suggested the Princess Juno.

"Drown him in molten lead!" shouted the Princess Minerva.

Then all three of these charming young



"'I hear you have the impertinence to want to marry me!'"

ladies rushed pell-mell down the stairs into the courtyard.

Princess Aphrodite, who was the first to catch sight of the blacksmith, rushed at him, crying out in furious wrath—

"I hear you have the impertinence to want to marry me! Take that!" and she aimed a blow at the blacksmith with all her force. But the young man parried the blow, and, with a smile and a profound bow, replied—

"No, your Highness; I merely said that I intended to marry the most beautiful woman in the kingdom."

Thereupon Princess Juno darted forward and, pushing her sister aside, exclaimed—

"Get out, Aphrodite, you beast! He wants to marry *me!* Let me get at him!"

But before she could do so, Princess Minerva seized her by her hair and pulled her back, shouting out—

"No, no! It is I!"

Then the three began to fight, and the blacksmith stood and watched them with ill-concealed mirth on his handsome face. Presently, when they had fought till they could fight no longer, they one after another dropped down exhausted on the pavement of the courtyard. There they sat, panting and breathless, with their hands clasped round their knees. Then the blacksmith spoke thus—

"Ladies, I have come to marry the most beautiful woman in the kingdom."

All three Princesses looked up at him as he spoke. Certainly he was very handsome:

each sister was inwardly conscious of a feeling that she would like him to think her the most beautiful woman in the kingdom.

Then they looked at one another.

Princess Aphrodite had a black eye.

Princess Juno had several severe scratches on her face.

Princess Minerva's nose was bleeding.

They realised that it was a singularly inopportune moment for any man to pronounce judgment as to their respective fascinations. Accordingly, they simultaneously and silently retired to their own apartments, and spent the afternoon applying unguents and lotions to their cheeks in order to remove the traces of the fray.

When the King came in from the Council, he at once noticed the peculiar quietness of the Castle, and forthwith asked if the Princesses were out. But when the servants replied that their Royal Highnesses were in their own apartments, the King held up his hands in surprise—

"Well, I'm blessed!" said he. "What does this mean?"

When they told him the story of the blacksmith, he was so delighted that he immediately sent for him and invited him to stay to dinner.

That dinner was a revelation of possibilities. Each Princess behaved herself with absolute propriety and courtesy. The King was lost in wonder and amazement, and helped himself to pickles with his pudding. The Queen pinched herself to see if she was awake. Both were delighted beyond measure, and implored the blacksmith to prolong his visit. He did so, and as time went on, the Castle became a changed place. No more squabbling and rowing and fighting, but, instead, cheerful faces and nice manners and pretty ways. Each Princess had resolutely determined that she would exert herself to please the blacksmith and be named by him the most beautiful woman in the kingdom. The King and Queen were so grateful to the blacksmith that they raised him to the proud position of a "Knight Companion of the Breakfast Table," and he was allowed to put the letters K.C.B.T. after his name.

But, in the meanwhile, other suitors came to the Castle who were not so critical. A prince, named Ivor, won the Princess Aphrodite's heart, and she consented to marry him.

On the eve of the wedding-day there was a grand ball in the Castle, and during an interval in the dancing, Princess Aphrodite went out alone to breathe the cool air on the terrace. As she sat there, the blacksmith came and stood beside her.

"So your Highness is not of a mind to await my decision," he said with a courtly bow.

The Princess turned round upon him with a merry light of laughter in her splendid eyes.

"No, I am not awaiting your decision, Sir Knight, because I am in love, and someone is in love with me. But," she continued naïvely, "I am quite ready to hear, before I leave the Palace, that you have decided in my favour."

"Princess," replied the blacksmith, "you are the most beautiful woman in the world——"

The Princess started and opened wide her great blue eyes, but the blacksmith added with a profound bow—"in Prince Ivor's eyes."

The Princess laughed sweetly as she replied: "Ah, that is more than all the world to me."

That night the King summoned the blacksmith and promoted him to a Barony.

But as time went on, and the blacksmith still reserved his decision, handsome lovers came and wooed and won the two remaining Princesses. On the night of Princess Minerva's wedding, the King summoned the blacksmith to his private apartment.

"Well, Sir Baron," said the King, "you are evidently hard to please. The last of the Princesses is married. What, if I may ask, are your plans for the future from a matrimonial point of view?"

"Sire," replied the blacksmith, with a profound obeisance, "I am going to marry the most beautiful woman in the kingdom."

That night, when all the guests had departed, the blacksmith saddled his horse and rode away into the forest. Horse and rider plunged fearlessly into the dark by-paths, for both knew well every inch of the way that led to the forester's cottage. If you had chanced to pass that way about an hour after the blacksmith left the Castle, and if you had stood at the cottage window and looked into the little, low-roofed kitchen, you might have beheld a charming picture.

On one side of the cheerful blaze sat the blacksmith, his chin resting in the palm of his hand. His eye never wandered from the lovely little figure of a maid who sat on a low stool at the other side of the hearth. Lightly her dainty fingers wandered among the flax which she was spinning from her distaff. From beneath her gaily coloured skirt, a dainty little foot peeped out to turn

"'I suppose not,' said the King."



the wheel, and presently, when she dropped her skein, the man knelt and picked it up, and, as he restored it to her, wound his arm around her waist, and, looking with all the world of love into her eyes, said—

"Beloved, let me take the skein of your life and wind it up with mine for ever?"

And she, full well content, pillowed her golden head on his shoulder, and thus they sat, looking into the firelight, whispering in antiphon that old sweet story which, though it as old as the hills, is always and for ever new.

* * * * *

The next morning the blacksmith presented himself before the King. He thanked His Majesty for all the favours and honours which had been granted to him, and only asked that, in return for any services which he had been enabled to render, he might now be permitted to return to his former

rank in life and leave the Palace as he had entered it, a poor blacksmith.

The King was loth to part with him, but could not compel him to stay. Moreover, he told the King that he was going to be married that very day.

The King smiled.

"Who is this loveliest lady in the kingdom?" he asked.

"Sire," replied the blacksmith, "she is, as befits my rank, the daughter of a poor man like myself, but for me she is the most beautiful woman in the kingdom."

And with that he departed.

Now the time drew near when the King should claim his youngest daughter from the good forester to whom he had entrusted her. Both father and mother had long awaited the day. When it came, the King went in person to bring his child in triumph to her real home. He came to the cottage and knocked at the door. It was opened by the forester himself.

The King explained he had come to fetch his daughter.

"Sire," said the forester, "she is not here."

"Not! Not here!" cried the King.

"No, Sire. She is married."

"Married!" shrieked the King, and he flew into a towering rage.

But the forester did not appear to be at all disturbed by his royal master's anger. He merely waited until His Majesty had recovered his usual demeanour, then he spoke thus:—

"Sire, you are not forgetful of the fact that, when you entrusted your daughter to my care, Your Majesty gave me complete and entire control over her until she should be twenty-one years of age. She was to be to me, in all respects, as my own daughter. Very well, Sire! A man comes here, a good man, a true man, a tender-hearted man, and he loves the maid right well. What am I to do? I argue thus with myself: Would I give my very own daughter to this man? Right gladly I would. Should I be doing a wrong to both if I refused? Marry! but I should be refusing the maid to the man whom alone she loves. Therefore I spake to the man, saying: 'Take her, she loves you.'"

Then an explanation ensued, and the King learned that Pasqualie had married a man answering to the description of the blacksmith.

The King did not wait to hear any further particulars, he mounted his horse and pressed on at full speed in the direction of his daughter's village home.

There it stood, a sweet little ivy-covered cottage. The King dismounted and, since there were no observers, approached cautiously and, standing on tip-toe, peeped in at the window.

What a little gem of a kitchen! Pots and pans shone like silver in the ruddy glow of the firelight, and before the fire sat the loveliest little housewife in all the land.

The King tapped at the door.

"Is your husband at home, good lady?" he inquired.

Pasqualie had no idea that the King had honoured her with a visit, but she dropped a sweet little curtsy and asked the gentleman to walk in and take a seat while she fetched her good man from the forge.

The blacksmith recognised the King at once and, bending the knee before him, said—

"Welcome, my liege, to our poor little home. Be sure that everything we have is at your service."

"Blacksmith," said the King, "you have married the most beautiful woman in the kingdom. You know that, don't you?"

"I do, Sire," said the proud husband, taking his lovely wife into his arms.

"But," continued the King in his most ferocious voice, "you probably do not know that you have married a Princess of the blood royal!" and His Majesty scowled.

"Sire," said the blacksmith, "Your Majesty has had fair warning that I am an ambitious man. You gave me every opportunity to win one of the Princesses. It would be hardly fair to quarrel with me because I have married the loveliest of them."

"I suppose not," said the King.

"There," said the Raven, "that's all."

But I was not at all satisfied with this abrupt ending.

"Tell me," I said, "did the King take them back with him to the Castle and restore to the blacksmith all his honours, appointing him his heir?"

"Bring me some more cheese and I'll tell you."

And then the greedy thing flew away.

WHITE WALLS.

By MAX PEMBERTON.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—On her twenty-first birthday the Countess Ulusia, sole heiress of the lords of Rabka, becomes in her own right the richest woman in Austria, and is escorted home from a convent school near Vienna—where she has spent the past fifteen years of her life—by her uncle, a bishop, and Count Rudolph of Trieste, who has managed the vast salt-mines of her ancestral estates during her minority. Count Rudolph has made up his mind to marry the heiress, but she has already gathered vaguely that he has cruelly oppressed the downtrodden populace that toils in her vast, subterranean salt-mines, and she is determined not only to exact an account of his stewardship, but to judge for herself of its wisdom and its humanity. She receives a picturesque welcome from the rough masses in her strange kingdom in the underworld, but soon realises that oppression has brought about a state of ferment bordering on insurrection. The more violent of the rebellious spirits are for throwing off all authority, even if it entails the killing not only of Count Rudolph, but of the young mistress in whose name they are harshly ruled. But Jura the Wise, a young man of unknown parentage, but a born leader of men, is sent by the aged Anna, "the Witch," from the mines to the Castle, with this command: "If she be our enemy, kill her as the people wish; if she be a friend, save her and show her to the people." Reared entirely in the underground world of the mines, but reared in mental culture and refinement by a monk named Arthur, the young idealist is thrilled by the strange beauty of the new world into which he emerges; but mindful of his mission he obtains a secret audience with the young Countess and tells her of her people's grievances. The police are visiting the people's houses to take their children from them. The old right of Parliament is being denied to them. There is a new scale of fine and punishment, and the people will not suffer it. "This is done in your name," cries Jura to the girl. "If it is not by your will, I will tell the people so." He is arrested, and the storm of insurrection breaks, but when the rioters besiege the tower in which their leader is imprisoned, Count Rudolph cries: "I cannot release the prisoner, for he is already free." Jura has escaped from his prison and rescues Ulusia from the fury of both fire and rioters, and when she opens her eyes from the long sleep of exhaustion she finds herself lying in one of the caves of the subterranean galleries of Rabka. Here she sojourns in safety, attended by the aged Anna, and here she learns how Jura was originally named Philip, after the lord Philip whom he strongly recalls in appearance. From Mathilde, a girl of the people, who loves Jura, the young Countess learns that Jura is thought to be the son of the dead lord Philip. The child died and was buried in the chapel of Rabka, but the child has come to life again and will be the master of the people. What, then, will be her own position if his right to reign in Rabka should ever be established? Justice must be done, but how? For the Count Rudolph long since banished the only man who held any proofs. Full of doubts, Ulusia leaves her refuge for Vienna, after stipulating that Jura shall follow her if she sends for him. Once she is gone, however, Jura is betrayed to the Count's soldiers and shut up in a madhouse at Pavna. The Count tells Ulusia that he has died there, but she sends a young Englishman, Lord Amblehurst, who is in love with her, to see the aged Anna, and subsequently to Jajce to search for the Monk Arthur and proofs of Jura's parentage. The girl Mathilde is allowed to bring a letter to Jura, summoning him to Vienna, because the Governor says: "The fool will risk his neck for this. If he tries to go by the mountains, we shoot him; if he leaps, he will be drowned." But with the aid of a boatman Jura succeeds in crossing the lake below the madhouse and reaches a wayside railway station. Even here, however, he is baulked, for he has been robbed by the boatman of the money conveyed to him by Mathilde, and cannot pay for his journey to Vienna. But Ulusia has telegraphed to the railway authorities, and when his identity becomes known he is helped on his way by all possible consideration, and arrives at the Erlach Palace just as Ulusia returns from a ball at the American Embassy. Meantime Lord Amblehurst obtains an interview with the Monk Arthur, from whom he gains no actual proof. Yet simultaneously there arrives a command from the Courts that the blind and feeble old priest shall be taken to Vienna at once, and, incidentally, a spy who dogs the Englishman's footsteps professes to be able to sell him the sought-for secret.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ULUSIA IS WARNED.

ULUSIA awaited her ambassador in the library of the Erlach Palace, that proud room which gives upon the park, and is famous among the libraries of the world for its collection of Italian missals and masterpieces of the Renaissance.

It was a quarter to seven upon a day of early summer, and every window stood wide open. She wore a gown of white lace with emeralds about her throat, and a fair pink rose which Jura had plucked for her.

These had been dark days for her, and the dawn seemed distant. Such a story as the Erlach Palace had to tell could not be kept within its gates, and the whole city now noised it abroad.

As ever, when a claim is made to great title and estates, there were bitter partisans. Some declared freely that this was the very romance which the mad lord Philip should have written in the days of his dementia. Others remembered that women were ever on the side of impostors, and recounting similar cases in Germany and England, said that Ulusia von Erlach was not the first who had been deceived.

All realised, however, that the supreme act of the drama must be played in the Courts which would decide the issue.

If the man were indeed Count Philip's son, his claim should be established very readily;

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if he were not, the sooner the law took him by the heels, the better. Mischief enough had been done; while, as for the good taste which left such a fellow at the Erlach Palace, well, the less said about that the better.

Few had seen Jura; these were impressed and passed on their favourable opinions to others. Certainly he was the living image of the great Philip; but this being admitted, there were reservations of a remarkable nature. The fellow had not the insignia of birth, not the true insignia. Something was lacking to his manner which even his unhappy life could not excuse. Ulusia, they thought, must herself be conscious of this, a deficiency which even her closest friends remarked. Here was a noble, if you would, branded with the mark of the bourgeois, curt, domineering, masterful, brave, but not a true Erlach, whose very word would convince. This led them to the obvious story, often repeated and readily believed. The Courts would declare the truth, they prophesied, and shame must attend the recital.

Ulusia had heard much of this talk, and she recalled it as she stood at the window of the crimson library and waited for the man who must answer aye or nay.

There had been moments when even she could ask, Is this a truth or a chimera; am I harbouring the son of my Uncle Philip or an impostor?

Pride trembled at her lack of conviction. She knew that she herself had been compelled to doubt more than once when in Jura's presence. And this by no fault of his, no lack of reverence or devotion, but by that intuition which taught her that Philip's son would have acted otherwise.

She had fought this battle against all the world, and these last few days had found her wavering. Combat her scruples as she would, they returned with tenfold force now at this moment of the crisis. What would happen, what she must do if Lord Amblehurst returned with ill news, she could not foresee. The warnings uttered by the guardians of the mine, the friendly counsels of General Wagner, the anger of Bishop Heinrich, were in her mind at this final hour. All would be lost or all won by the Earl's disclosures; nor would her unselfishness stoop to the thought that victory for the man meant instant eclipse for the woman, and loss of all these possessions which the city had envied her.

Lord Amblehurst entered the library just after the clock had struck seven. He had been to his hotel and changed; but she thought that the journey had tired him, and her solicitude upon that score betrayed no mere womanly sympathy, but something deeper. She was a quick reader of character, and his manner alarmed her, but she did not speak of alarm when she held his hand and thanked him for coming.

"I knew that you would not send me excuses; it is good of you to think of me first."

"Then goodness and compulsion are twin brothers. Why am I in Vienna if it is not to obey you? Of course I came; my news would not wait."

She felt her pulse quicken, knew that her face was aflame, and turned it from him when next she spoke.

"My uncle says that the priest will be in Vienna to-morrow. You have seen him; you know whether it is true or false."

"It is quite true. The Court has issued an order, and the Prefect of Jajce sends him to Vienna. You will be disappointed, Ulusia; he is very, very old and he is blind."

She uttered a little cry and her face turned deadly pale. "Does he deny that Jura is my cousin? Is he so old that he does not remember that?" she asked almost angrily. In answer he took her hand and led her towards the window.

"I fear it is so. The priest has told me as much, Ulusia. He cannot answer as we wish; he advises Jura not to press the claim."

"Then it is false!"

"He will not say so. That Jura is Philip's son he is ready to affirm; but, as it is better that you should know, he does not think it will help us."

She withdrew her hand from his and, sitting at the writing-table by the window, she hid her face during long minutes of a silence which was pathetic. All the glory of her romance had been eclipsed in that instant—the flight from Rabka's Castle, the days of seclusion in the mine, the events at Pavna. Oh, what a mockery was this, what imposition upon her credulity! And the fault had been her own. She had been so willing to believe, so willing. No doubt had warred upon her faith, no doubt of her own assent from the beginning.

Amblehurst understood this mood, a woman's mood, too well to break in upon it. He did not forbid her to weep, did not seek to lighten her burden. Better that she should reckon with herself now, before the

tragedy deepened, than in the culminating hours.

"What are we to do?" she exclaimed anon, rising as one weary yet determined still to wage the good fight. "How are we to save him, Lord Amblehurst? You know what this means; you know what his enemies will do. Help me, for I am helpless; help me to save my cousin from prison."

He was glad that she had asked him this, glad that she had spoken of help rather than of determination.

"I came here for no other reason," he said, crossing the room and sitting by her. "For this I returned immediately from Jajce. The hours are precious, Ulusia; we have no time to lose. I have told you already that they are bringing the priest to Vienna."

Her eyes flashed; the new significance of this electrified her.

"Who told you this—whose word is it?"

"The Prefect of Jajce. He has his orders; the Courts have issued them."

"Then the truth will be told—to all the world—they mean to shame him publicly?"

"Unless we can prevent it; I have thought of it, but am perplexed. Did not this friar swear for years that Jura was Philip's son? What should prevent the same tale being told in Vienna? Frankly, I do not understand him. The man is a priest, and he is the author of the story. Will he deny it at the eleventh hour? I cannot believe it."

"But he has denied it already; he has denied it to you."

"I must admit that it is so; and yet I have my own opinions. These lead me to believe that it is not wise for your friend to remain in Vienna."

She started up, afraid to hear from him a truth she had known from the first.

"You are thinking of his arrest?"

"Of nothing else. It may be their shortest road to salvation. Jura should not be in Vienna to-morrow; he should not be in the city."

She came and stood before him, and their eyes met upon a determination of their mutual purpose.

"Is your friendship sufficient to answer for this? Will you save him if the priest does not?"

"I will try," he said, and that was all.

* * * * *

A gong summoned them to dinner upon this, and they returned to the great saloon to find Jura there, and with him the Bishop Heinrich and the Baroness Elwitza. Amblehurst paid her the expected compliments, but had eyes for Jura alone. This son of the mines was a splendid figure truly; his new clothes sat upon him to perfection; dignity of manner was not to be denied. None the less, the Englishman was conscious of something indefinable, a suggestion of doubt he knew not how to justify, a hesitation prompted perhaps by the events of the recent days. Was it possible, after all, that the story was one of wrong? The priest had denied it emphatically, and he of all men knew the truth.

They spoke of commonplace things about that gorgeous table—of the coming annexation of the provinces of Bosnia and of Hertzegovina, of possible troubles with the Slavs; the Baroness of the decay of gallantry among the soldiers of the day, who were sadly changed since her time; the Bishop of French infidelities and the danger of their growth in Vienna.

To the Englishman the talk was tragic in its futility. He knew that this was in truth a house of woe, that the shadow of humiliation lay heavy upon it, that many a hovel in the city could show you happier faces. Above all, the inspired eyes of the "impostor," if such he were, magnetised him, and were not to be avoided.

Must this poor fellow, the victim of a lying fable, must he spend his days in prison, doomed by Destiny for the rest of his life? And the young girl, whose heart had gone out to his romance, must she mourn for him to the end? He knew not what to think; his passion for Ulusia was fed by the very doubt; he saw her already the mistress of Amblehurst Castle, his wife whom many must worship.

Upon the Englishman, indeed, the burden of the night lay. He must play this tragi-comedy for them all, railing the Baroness, sympathising with the Bishop, recalling anecdotes that had rusted long ago in London, even speaking of the mines and seeking to move Jura to confession. The latter was the hopeless task. This man, whose burning words of eloquence had stirred his comrades many a time and oft, whose scorn had lashed their follies, whose sympathy had won their love—here, in this his father's house, was dumb. He could but answer in monosyllables; the past was hidden behind the curtain of his youth, and had become meaningless to him.

And so they fell again to the commonplace

of daily chatter, and but two remembered that the morrow must be a morrow of crisis, when the truth would be known to the city and to the world.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LORD AMBLEHURST RESOLVES.

THE night was calm and still, and a new moon bright in the sky, when Amblehurst quitted the Erlach Palace on foot and entered the wide Hauptstrasse which runs before its gates.

He had made the fineness of the night an excuse for dismissing his coachman, but, in truth, an idea had come to him and would not brook delay.

Listening in the train to the heroics of the Italian, Pietro Ritzi, he had paid little heed to them ; but here in Vienna, in face of the crisis, they called for a fairer hearing. He would go, there and then, to the Hôtel d'Italie and hear what the fellow had to say. If he wasted his money, what matter ? Had he not wasted other money in earlier years upon purposes less worthy ? And if the rogue were also a cheat, at least curiosity would be gratified ?

He watched the carriage out of sight and then turned about to find a cab. The Erlach Palace is fended about its inner courtyard by a monstrous high wall which might be that of a barracks, and by this the Englishman was passing when a young girl emerged suddenly from the shadows and, looking intently at him for an instant, passed away into the moonlight and so vanished. Remarking that she was a wonderfully pretty girl, and that her eyes were glorious, Amblehurst lighted his cigar and passed on. He had found a cab in two minutes, and in three was being driven, as only the Hungarians can drive a man, to the Hôtel d'Italie by the Rossauer Kaserne.

This was a squalid hotel, not far from the Danube, the resort of Italians from Dalmatia and the scum of the Levant. As it befell, there was no need at all to ask for the particular rascal Pietro Ritzi, for he sat at a little table by the door when the Englishman entered, and upon his knee sat a gipsy girl from Cattaro, who had just been entertaining the company with a guitar she could not play and a dance which was indescribable.

Uttering a cry of real pleasure, the Italian threw her aside upon seeing the Englishman, whom he greeted as though they had been the best of friends.

"I knew your lordship would want me," he said *sotto voce;* "but no names here, upon any account. Come up to my room, my lord ; the papers that you require will be there."

He pushed his way through the throng, expecting no response, and led the way up a shabby, gilded staircase to a wide landing above. His room gave off from this, and was by no means without its luxuries, dirty and faded as the ornaments were. A violent pull upon a crimson bell-rope brought a perspiring Italian waiter to the place, and then, for the first time, Pietro Ritzi recovered his dashing manner.

"Your lordship will honour me by taking something ? Oh, yes, they have the English whisky here ; but the Chianti is very good, my lord. Shall we smoke the Boch cigar ? I know nothing better in this house, and their judgment is not bad."

Amblehurst said that he would smoke a cigar, nor did he refuse the whisky. He judged that formality would not serve him, and he was not displeased to find the Italian in a loquacious mood. When the refreshments had been served and the door firmly closed by Pietro, they sat upon either side of a once splendid marble chimney and immediately fell to talk of the affair.

"Well, am I not a good prophet, my lord ?" asked the Italian as he bit off the end of an excellent cigar. "Did I not tell you that I had something to sell which you would be very glad to buy ?"

"Admittedly you did. The honours of prophecy are altogether yours, Signor Ritzi, at the moment."

"But why, 'at the moment,' my lord ?"

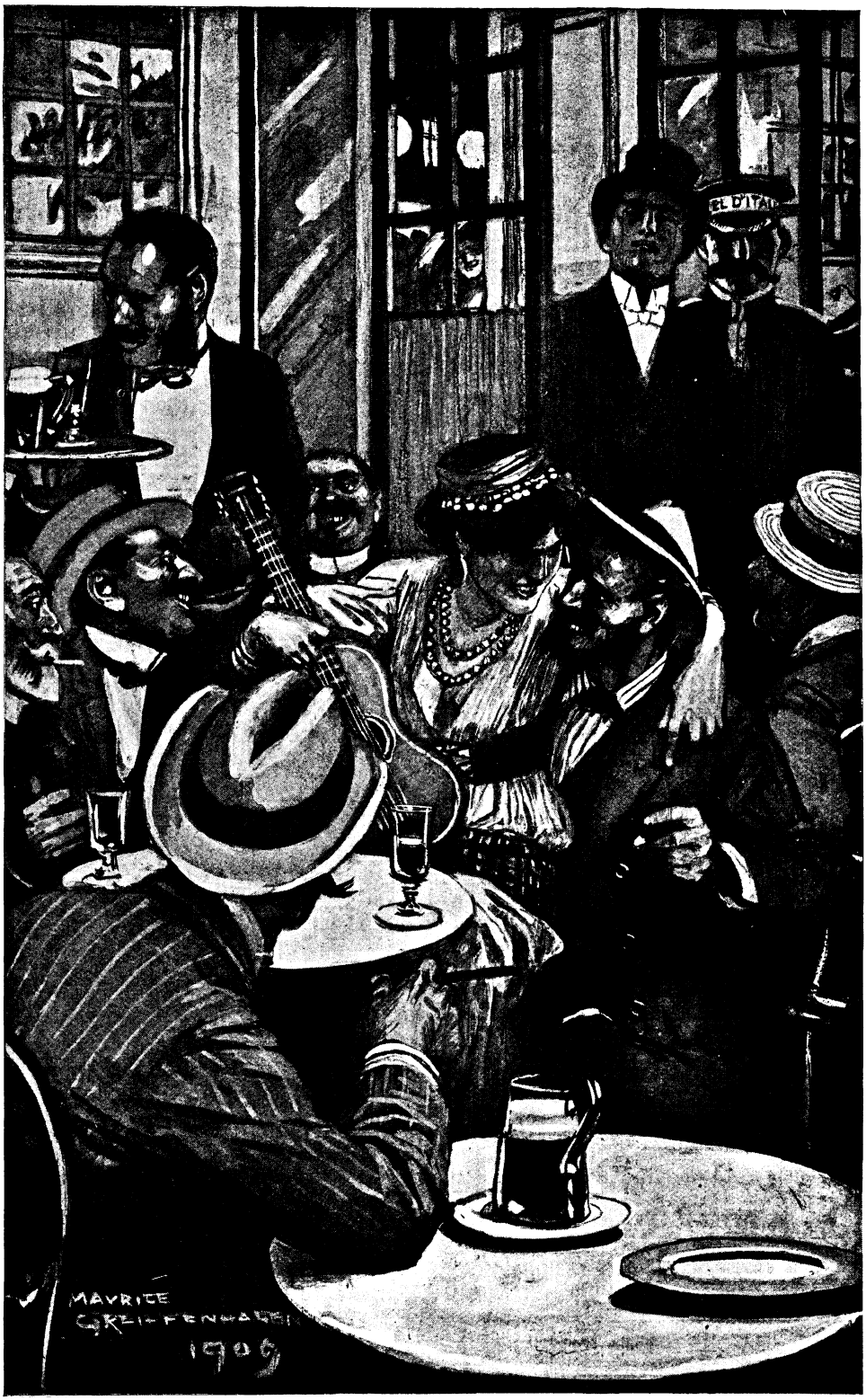
"It is obvious, surely. If you have something to sell, I must know what it is. You do not expect me to deal in mere confidences ?"

The Italian shrugged his shoulders. "Let us have done with all this !" he snapped in a sudden turn of anger quite foreign to his previous manner. "You have come here to buy from me the true story of Count Philip of Rabka and of his son. I am willing to sell it to you, because I understand the Englishman and am ready to take his word of honour and his money. If you give me that, my lord, I will speak quite freely."

Amblehurst reflected.

"And what would my word concern ?"

"My own safety ; the means whereby this document fell into your hands. It is quite simple. You were at the monastery of Jezero before me ; they will believe that you



"He sat at a little table by the door when the Englishman entered."

persuaded them to give you the paper. Should it be known that I sold it to you—I who was the emissary of Count Rudolph——"

"Count Rudolph, who sent you to Jajce?"

"I have admitted it. His money is in my pocket. I wish to add yours to it, to be paid to me in London, where I go by the morning mail."

"You find Vienna unhealthy in the spring?"

A gleam of fire shot through Pietro's eyes, but they were laughing again when he replied——

"It is so—an unhealthy climate, Lord Amblehurst. I much prefer your London fogs; they make identity more difficult."

"Why did you think of me in this matter?"

"Was it not natural? I searched the priest's papers when he was asleep, and found something which Rudolph would burn, and, having burned, would send me to prison because I found it. Then I remember that the rich Englishman is seeking what I have found—is it wonderful that I come to him?"

"I understand you. How much money do you ask for this paper?"

"A thousand pounds, my lord, to be paid to me in London."

"The paper being valuable?"

"Am I not putting myself into your hands? If I cheat you, will you pay me?"

Lord Amblehurst smiled.

"Not a shilling, upon my word of honour."

"Then, my lord, it is a bargain between us. Stay, I will give you the document, and then I will go a little way home with you. There are compatriots of mine so curious that they would look into your very pockets. I will take care they do not, my lord."

"Oh," said Amblehurst, with a laugh, "I have a cab waiting."

* * * * *

Twelve o'clock was striking when the Englishman left the Rossauer Kaserne, and a quarter past as his cab approached the Erlach Palace. This *détour* had been a mere idea dictated by a sentiment he would not have confessed. Twice before had he driven thus at a late hour of the night and looked up to the windows of that room wherein Ulusia slept. The very vicinity of the Palace could move him strangely these later days when the shadow of tragedy lay upon it.

There were lights in her window, and willing eyes deceived him with a momentary apparition which quickened his pulse and brought the blood to his cheeks. She was not sleeping, then; for her, as for him, there could be no escape from this dominating issue, no finality of the night until the vital words were spoken. He did not doubt that she awaited the morrow as the supreme day of her young life, when illusion must give place to triumph or be shattered in a humiliating *débâcle* of which all Europe would hear.

He had halted a brief moment below her window, but, anon, reflecting upon the folly of such a vigil, he was about to tell the man to drive on to the hotel, when, from that very portico he had quitted but two hours ago, he perceived the figure of the white-faced girl who had then arrested his attention; and, perceiving it, instantly took a resolution. That she waited for someone within the Erlach Palace he could not doubt; and reflecting upon it further, he said she would be one of the women from the mine at Rabka, and that she waited there because of the man Jura.

It was but a guess; he made no claim to infallibility of insight, and would afterwards admit that sheer instinct put the thought into his head. As for the girl herself, she lay crouching by the shadows of the portico, her hair dishevelled, her face without a tinge of colour, her whole attitude that of supreme distress. Hunted already by the police, she watched the stranger intently and was about to dart away into the deeper shadows of the archway when the sound of his voice arrested her and she stood motionless, afraid either to retreat or to advance, and trembling with agitation.

"What is your name, girl? why do you wait here?"

"I am Mathilde, Excellency—the servant to Mother Anna of Rabka."

"Then you wait to see her son Jura?"

"Yes, yes, Excellency, I wait to see him; but the servants turn me away. I have waited many days, Excellency; he is in danger, and I must speak to him."

"What do you know of it, girl? who sent you here?"

"The Mother Anna. He is to return to Rabka. We will hide him, Excellency; we will save him from his enemies."

"Have you no lodging in the city, my child?"

"I was robbed of my money. The police sent me back to Rabka, but I left the train and returned. I must speak to Jura,

Excellency. Oh, such long hours of waiting, and I am so tired, Excellency."

"Get into that cab; I will hear what you have to say as we go. Do not fear, I am an Englishman."

He opened the door, indifferent to the astonishment expressed cynically upon the box, and the guffaw which an amused cabman could not suppress. The girl herself appeared to be half dead with fear and hope; she scrambled headlong in the carriage, and was trembling still when Amblehurst followed.

"What do you know of Herr Jura, girl? I must hear everything."

"I have known him for many years, Excellency. I was his servant, I worked for him in the mine."

"That is no reason for your being in Vienna."

She answered almost with a moan.

"No, no, not a reason at all, Excellency. But I cannot tell you; I have suffered much and I cannot tell you."

A new thought flashed across the man's mind.

"Is he your lover, Mathilde?"

She buried her face in her hands and wept silently; but she neither admitted nor denied the imputation. A passing lamp, searching out her figure as they turned from the Hauptstrasse, gave to it a shapely grace of matured beauty, and when next she looked up, her eyes shone brightly in the darkness.

"The Mother Anna sent me to warn him, Excellency. The priest has betrayed us—I came to Vienna to tell him so."

"And they refused you admittance to the Palace?"

"Yes, yes, they would not hear me. I have been there many days. I saw him with her every day, but he has never seen me. He is much changed, Excellency; he is not the Jura we have known. It is wicked to deceive him as the woman has deceived him. He will be punished because of her madness, and his old friends will never see him again."

"What do you mean by saying that the priest has betrayed you?"

She cringed at this, fearful of her own words.

"The Mother Anna knows. I cannot tell you, Excellency. She sent me here when they threatened to take her to the prison."

"*They* threatened her—do you mean the Count?"

"Yes, yes, the Lord Governor. He knows the truth. He will punish Jura—he has sworn it. But the people would save him, Excellency, for they believe him to be their king."

"And you yourself—has Jura spoken of love to you?"

She answered him not a word, falling suddenly to silence and to weeping.

The cab had now driven up to the Hôtel Métropole, where the difficulties of his quixotic impulse occurred to Amblehurst for the first time and put him to some embarrassment. These he brushed aside, however, for was not eccentricity ever a travelling Englishman's prerogative?

"I am going to ask the people at this hotel to take care of you," he said, when the cab stopped. "To-morrow, perhaps, you shall be sent back to Rabka, but not unless it is safe for you to go. Your message is in safe keeping. I, myself, will carry it to the Erlach Palace and will tell them how it came."

"Will you send me alone, Excellency?"

They were on the pavement then, and she had caught him by the sleeve, the pathos of her entreaty firing her pale cheeks and lighting her expectant eyes. To Amblehurst the whole affair was as clear as day; he understood both the mad passion which had sent her upon this journey and the meaning of the warning which the old woman had uttered. Perhaps a new hope followed upon the circumstance, but he would make no promises to Mathilde. "It will be time enough to speak of that to-morrow. I will see you again when I have thought about it. Go to your bed now and sleep; the people here will have my instructions to look after you."

He entered the hotel, Mathilde following upon his heels, and gave his instructions to the astonished porter. This girl, he said, was an old servant of the Erlach Palace; she was to be fed, harboured, and, as soon as it was possible on the morrow, to be found new clothes, as he would instruct them. To all of which the yawning official could but respond: "Yes, my lord," though to himself he said a hundred times that all Englishmen were mad, but that this was the maddest of them all. None the less he dared to wake a housekeeper and to pass on his instructions; and the last that Amblehurst saw of Mathilde was her white face following the porter to the steward's room, and the mute surprise and gratitude her eyes expressed.

In another mood it might have amused him to study this phase of surprise a little deeper, to have reflected upon the contrast of the mine, with its suggestion of the

majesty of eternal darkness, and this garish house of light and pleasure and tawdry splendours. But, in truth, he gave no thought to it at all; but, entering his bedroom and putting on his dressing-gown, he lighted a cigar and sat down to peruse the paper he had purchased at so high a price.

There are few records of mystery in which the truth, when ultimately revealed, is not commonplace—nay, often ridiculous in its primitive simplicity. When Amblehurst unfolded this tattered manuscript, when he set a lamp near to his chair, that he might decipher the ancient writing with greater ease, he could not but dwell a little while upon his own opinions of the case and the conclusion to which they had led him. Had he sought justification for his belief that the man Jura was an impostor, this girl's confession, trapped as it were by the circumstances of the night, would have been his ready excuse. For had she not told him, unwittingly, that the old woman Anna was privy to the conspiracy in which the priest had been expected to play so bold a part? And was not her very alarm the sure witness to the dangers of exposure which the hours threatened?

By some means, he knew not what, a message had passed across the kingdom from the mountain to distant Rabka and had warned the woman that the house of fables was about to fall. In her turn she had sent the girl Mathilde to Vienna, lacking other messenger; and by this willing instrument of deception the truth had been told.

Told, truly, but in what measure? Was the priest wholly master of the lord Philip's story, or but a lesser actor upon a puny scene? So much the manuscript should tell him, and, convinced that it was what it purported to be, a private paper stolen from the cell in the monastery of Jezero, Lord Amblehurst began to read at last, and was still so occupied when the new day dawned.

For had he not promised Ulusia that he would save her cousin Jura if safety were to be purchased at any price, and was not this document his supreme—nay, his only hope?

He read it to the last line, and having slept a few brief hours, he summoned his valet and began to dress.

"I am going to the English Embassy," he said. "See that my carriage is ordered at once."

CHAPTER XXX.

RUDOLPH OF TRIESTE VISITS THE PALACE.

RUDOLPH of Trieste had been more of a hero to his own valet than to his fellows, and whatever his solicitude for the inner man, his forethought for the outer was a constant factor of his daily life.

Indeed, he dressed with an actor's regard for both the perfection of the ensemble and the correctness of the detail; and his bitterest enemy readily conceded him such honours as the tailors had to bestow. They used to tell you at the Erlach Palace that the Kaiser had once asked him what he would do if a speck of mud fell upon his trousers, and he had answered, with pomp and circumstance, that Nature knew better than to treat her chosen so ill. And, truly, the speck of mud in question had yet to be discovered by the closest observer, and had become the subject of a wager in the clubs.

Now the Count had returned from Rabka in some haste upon the occasion when he was next found with Ulusia von Erlach; but he had been faithful to his reputation; and even a long night in the ironically named "express" had not dimmed the magnificence of his appearance.

A fine frock-suit of the palest grey cloth, a hat which outshone the mirrors, wonderful boots with fawn tops, gloves in a pretty shade of primrose, a cane with a head carved of jade, helped him to much satisfaction as he followed the butler to the crimson library and there notified that his business was urgent and that he must see her Excellency at once.

It was eleven o'clock upon the morning of the day which carried Lord Amblehurst to the Imperial Palace, a day momentous beyond any in the story of this house and of its people. None, however, would have judged as much by Rudolph's manner, or imagined any other purpose than that of the commonest convention. Humming softly to himself, he searched the room and the writing-desks with quick eyes, peered into the garden, toyed with a gold cigarette-case, and finally dropped impatiently into an armchair, there to exclaim upon woman's love of procrastination and her intolerable delays.

Such was the man and such the mood when Ulusia entered the room five minutes later, and stood amazed to be confronted by so unexpected an intruder. Had not she forbidden him the Palace since the night of the insult, and might she not well exclaim upon the effrontery which could support his return?

As it chanced, both surprise and displeasure were lost upon the Count, who, ignoring them, stood smiling and bowing, as though

they had parted the best of friends, and had met again to their mutual satisfaction.

"I gave you five minutes—you come in five," he exclaimed, with a flourish of the hat as though to mark triumph; "that is real charity, upon such an occasion."

She looked at him with quick eyes.

"Why do you return to my house, Count? Are you not aware——"

"My dear child, we are too old friends for that. Things are said at unpleasant moments which friendship must hasten to forget. Behold me in ashes——"

She smiled in spite of herself.

"Oh, please!" she exclaimed, and then her eager curiosity mastered her. She bade him sit.

"Have you come to speak to me of my cousin Jura?"

He waved the claim aside with an airy gesture.

"We are here to talk as brother and sister. I claim the privilege; it is my title. Let nothing apologise for frankness at such a time. I left Rabka the moment I heard the truth. I doubt not you expected me."

"Indeed no, since the truth has yet to be told me."

He assumed a look of bland incredulity.

"They have not told you that the Government has come to a decision?"

She shook her head, afraid to speak.

"But, my dear child, you should have been the first to hear it. They are to arrest him to-night; directly the priest has confessed."

"Why do they wait for the priest, Count?"

"In the interests of us all. What he has to tell is better told in this house than in the Courts. I have seen General Wagner, and we assent to their proposal. If the priest makes a clean breast of it, and the man hears him, he may be willing to do likewise. Then it would be an easy affair. We shall offer the fellow an alternative—either a trial with its consequences, or banishment to the islands. He will choose the latter, of course. There is a class of adventurer which knows when it is beaten, and your friend Jura belongs to it. I have not a doubt as to his decision. He will go to the islands, and we shall allow him a pension of a thousand guldens. Would he not be a madman to compel us to make this scandal public?"

The Count was very pleased by his own statement, which terminated in a chuckle of satisfaction and an attitude which spoke of a mind at ease. Oh, it was all done with; but it had been an ugly nightmare, and it had frightened him very much for a season. Now, however, he saw the end of it, his own sovereignty established at Rabka, and this masterful little lady given over to the pleasures of Vienna and of such a portion of her fortune as must decently be paid to her. Rudolph was almost consoled in that moment for the failure of his fuller purpose of matrimony. They would never have agreed; and to quarrel with a woman, he remembered, is to quarrel with the two-edged sword of exasperation and futility.

"Yes," he repeated, "we have planned it all out, and the rest is with your friend. I am sorry for you, Countess, for your faith has been generous. These fables naturally appeal to women. The man told a plausible story and you imagined the rest. Very well, we shall take the consequences upon ourselves."

"But, Count, if he refuse your alternative?"

She had been pacing the room; but now she came and stood before him, and the expression upon her face was one which boded no good to his plans.

He perceived the trend of affairs at once and his tone changed.

"In that case, my dear lady, he will be tried immediately, and his sentence will be——"

He paused and looked up at her.

"You must remember," he said, his eyes averted from hers, "that the affair of the Castle has yet to be tried. There were men murdered at Rabka that night, and your father's house was burned. Can you blame authority if it lays those crimes at this man's door? Would you be surprised if the sentence were — well, the uttermost penalty?"

"And that, Count?"

"Is death."

Ulusia well understood that her face betrayed her, but she determined that her voice should not.

"You are going very fast, Count Rudolph. Have you asked yourself what would happen if the priest does not speak as you wish?"

He laughed.

"Oh, in that case we shall try the pair of them. It is quite understood—I have just seen the General."

"Then why do you come to me?"

"Why does a man go to a woman—to ask one of two things, her help or her love. I seek both, my dear child, but the first-named is in my mind at this moment. You are the

man's friend, and he will listen to you. Tell him to go to the islands. If you would save him, point out that the alternative is—well, what I have named. They will not give him a second chance. Let him go before to-morrow is old. I think you owe it to him to say as much. Now, does not your Excellency agree with that?"

He rose upon the words and stood before her, prim and vaunting and very full of his achievement. This mad affair might not be a bad thing for Rudolph, after all; there was that in the Count's mind when he put the question. Nor was he in any way disappointed by her considered response—she could not have answered differently.

"I will speak to Jura and to my friends," she said.

He raised his brows.

"To your friend Lord Amblehurst? By all means do so. I am told that the British people are generous—when asked for advice. Consult your English friend, and do not delay. The hours are precious."

"Oh," she cried, her anger prevailing, "I will choose my own time!"

The outburst did not displease him. His point had been gained, the glove thrown down. She would speak to her friends, and they would tell her that the hours of the madness were done with, the fable outlived, the truth made known. Henceforth, he, Rudolph, would be master at Rabka, and for that his whole life had been lived.

"As you please, Countess," he said, drawing on his gloves and taking up his hat. "I shall now go to General Wagner and tell him what has been decided. If you prefer that the priest should go to his house——"

"Oh, no, no!" she exclaimed, "he must come here; I will believe nothing until I hear him."

"Then that shall be at ten o'clock to-night, one hour after the train arrives from Brod. Until then, my respects, Countess."

* * * * *

She heard the door close behind him, and for a little while did not change her position, but stood in a deep reverie, as though she still debated the Count's words. At last she appeared to arrive at a resolution, and, passing out slowly into the garden, she discovered Jura there, and called him to her. He came, obedient as ever to her summons, the figure of a man moving in a world of dreams, and never to be awakened from them. The book he carried in his hand spoke of men and deeds beyond his comprehension; he knew that a long night of sovereignty had ended in this debasement, and that henceforth another must occupy the throne from which he had been cast down.

They had been wonderful weeks, such, perhaps, as no other has lived or will live. Though the dawn of the day no longer claimed an ecstasy of delight, and the hour of sunset was not accompanied by fear, the greater world remained to him a profound mystery, of which his untutored intelligence could grasp no intelligible idea.

Years of labour in the mine had taught him that he was not as other men. Whispered fables, the Mother Anna's gospel, and the homage of his fellow-men had built that superstructure of imagined right which this city of Vienna demolished beyond all hope.

He knew now that he was not fit to take that place to which his heritage had called him. All the talk he heard, the interests and recreations of men, the strife for honours and riches, had no meaning for one to whom a handful of fruit had been a banquet, a draught of red wine a potion for the gods.

Jura listened and his heart shrank. What title had he to call these nobles brethren or to range himself in their ranks? The dominion he waged in the mine had been a true dominion. None there was so clever as he to direct the great army of slaves or to command it; none was so truly master of gorge and chasm. But here in the realms of light and sunshine—aye, here he was still a child, and the world did well to mock him.

He had striven hard, remembering often the Mother's words, and saying: "I am the lord Philip's son, and this is my heritage." His gratitude to Ulusia, the homage he had paid her, remained among the surest emotions which afflicted him; but their nature had changed, so that he began to shrink from her also, believing that he was not worthy, and finding personal humiliation in her patronage. True it is that the man in him would recall the golden hours when first he had known her divinity and set it above all thoughts of her womanhood; but he began to be ashamed of those very victories in the end, and to deplore them. What title had he, whom the darkness spurned, to dwell in her house and permit her to call him cousin? Did not the servants deride him, the very lacqueys show their contempt? And he was powerless to defend himself; his crown was of straw, and the gold had turned already to ashes in his hand.

He came, obedient to Ulusia's call, and

followed her into the library, whither she returned. He was unaccustomed to study woman's moods, but her manner gave him some index to her agitated thoughts; and he understood that this was not a common hour. Some evil had entered into the house, and she was here to speak of it—she who would not hear of evil hitherto, but only of hope and of her abiding faith.

"Jura," she asked, "has anyone spoken to you of your old teacher, Father Arthur?"

He answered, but with emotion—

"Why should they speak—of the dead?"

She came close to him and put her hand upon his arm.

"No, no," she said; "my friend Lord Amblehurst has discovered the truth. Father Arthur is alive and well. He lives at Jajce in the mountains. He is coming here to-night, Jura."

A cold sweat burst out upon the man's face; he began to tremble violently.

"How long have you known this, Ulusia?"

"I heard it some days ago; but I feared to tell you, lest it should not be true. But now I know; and so I wish to prepare you, for surely you understand what this may mean to us?"

He turned from her and stood a little while by the open window. Presently he said—

"I am glad that he should come, Ulusia. I am glad that all should know the truth; but for you I am sorry. To us it will make no difference, however; you will continue to live here in this place as though nothing had happened; I shall go out into the world as a child who seeks knowledge. But you will always be my dear kinswoman, who first taught me that the sun shines upon the earth and that men live because of its light. Yes, yes, it will make no difference to you; but to me it must mean everything. I am glad that the people should know."

She sighed deeply, and went and stood beside him. It may be that she was afraid of the violent thoughts, half passionate, half of despair, which agitated her and obscured the whole truth. To Ulusia this was an hour of some stupendous tragedy which must wreck a man's life and leave a woman to be a scorn of her unselfish faith. And it was tragedy inevitable—nothing could turn the course of it.

"Jura," she exclaimed, "are you quite certain that Father Arthur will say what you wish?"

"Am I certain?"—he looked her full in the face, his eyes expressing both reproach and wonder—"am I certain that I live, that you are beside me? Did he not teach me so from my earliest years—that I had a great destiny to fulfil, that my place was in the world? If I did not understand him, it was because the darkness would not let me read the riddle aright. But now I know, and am glad that he should come. It is your reward and mine—the truth made known, our justification for what we have done."

And then he said very solemnly—

"I believe it to be the judgment of God that this should happen, Ulusia—I read in it the answer to my prayer."

She knew not how to answer him—such faith appalled her—and yet she must tell him.

"I hope that it may be so, Jura," she exclaimed earnestly; "whatever may happen, my own opinion remains unchanged. You are my kinsman, and this house and its fortunes are your heritage. Whatever the priest may say——"

His eyes flashed.

"The priest will tell the truth. Is he not coming for that? Why do you speak of it?"

"Because Lord Amblehurst warns me to do so."

"He warns you?"

"Yes, yes, he has seen Father Arthur in the monastery at Jezero; he is a very old man and blind. Lord Amblehurst warns me that he will not help us."

He reeled as from a blow. Her evasions had not deceived him. The priest had spoken and had denied him. He knew it by the sure instinct of despair which is infallible. The man who had been as a father to him, who had taught him to see the light in the blackness of the mine, who had preached each day the gospel of his destiny—this man had denied him.

"Tell me all," he exclaimed, in a low voice; "keep nothing from me."

She laid her hand upon his arm.

"You must leave Vienna, Jura—the hours are precious. You must go to-night when you have seen Father Arthur. I will help you; I will go with you if you wish it. Is not my fortune yours—is not this house your heritage? I know it, and cannot suffer a wrong to be done. Jura, I will go where you will. The world is open to us. We will make a new home in another country—we will forget these days of trial. It has been in my mind to speak to you of this since I had the news from Jezero; but I waited until Lord Amblehurst should return.

Jura, do you understand me? I will go with you if you ask me."

He uttered a loud cry, as though her words tortured him, and reeling out into the garden, he cried, as he went—

"I will see the priest; I will force him to confess!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE END OF THE DAY.

THERE is, beyond the outer hall of the Erlach Palace, a famous octagon, built in the French fashion and panelled with the fine woods and silks of the East.

Of the eight doors of this interesting apartment, one gives upon the great saloon wherein Count Philip von Erlach housed his collection of Italian pictures for which the Palace has long been famous. Other arches give access to the state dining-room upon the left hand and the private apartments upon the right, near which is a stately organ with "echo" pipes in the gallery above.

There is nothing in all Vienna quite so beautiful as this octagon, nor so justly esteemed by connoisseurs, who permit its profusion of decoration for the sake of its originality of conception, and suffer its wealth of ornament as a just addition to a structural effect such as few architects have achieved.

In this famous room, upon the evening of the day which should bring the Benedictine monk to Vienna, Ulusia sat at her writing-table, busily employed upon a letter which engrossed her attention and forbade her even to notice the passing of the hours.

Above her a profusion of wax candles had been lighted in the cut-glass chandeliers which Count Philip brought from Murano; the door leading to the great saloon stood open and showed other candelabra bearing a burden of lights and a profusion of pink roses in sharp contrast with the blue silk of the panelling. It was a quarter to ten o'clock, and absolute silence prevailed in the Palace. Indeed, so profound was this that when a bell rang sonorously from the outer hall, the girl uttered an exclamation which was almost a cry, and instantly stood to see who came.

"His Excellency the Earl of Amblehurst."

The Englishman had dined at his hotel and come straight on to the Palace according to his promise. Accustomed as Ulusia was to the glittering uniforms which thronged her salons, this plain evening-dress with the unadorned white waistcoat seemed to her to mark a man apart, and to suggest that association of youth, wisdom, and manliness which were Lord Amblehurst's just attributes. That she might trust him with her most intimate thoughts she had known from the beginning. But to-night she began to understand that he was the one friend whom her riches had won for her.

"It is a quarter to ten," he said, as he took her hand and held it for a moment in his own. "I have sent down to the station, and they tell me that the express should arrive punctually, so I came at once. If there is anything you wish to say to me while we are alone——"

"There is much," she interrupted, nor could he forbear to notice the restraint of her manner and the difficulties which embarrassed her; "there is very much, though how I shall say it I do not know. In the first place, Jura has been told."

He was surprised at this.

"He has been told that the priest will repudiate him?"

"Yes, I thought it better that he should be warned. Count Rudolph was here this morning and put the alternative to me. They will permit him to leave the country; but if he refuses, they will arrest him."

"Ah, 'they will'—observe the significance of this. 'They'—these people whose only interest is their own, 'they' are to be the arbiters. Well, I think we may qualify that. Did they speak of authority?"

"Their own. My friendship is to be shown by compliance. If Jura goes, they will do nothing. They say that it is for the honour of our house—the honour which begins in this dishonour."

He mused upon it a little while, for, in truth, this had been among his own ideas.

"We must be just to them," he said anon. "I think they are wise in studying your interests as well as those of the man. But I do not say that this is the fairest way."

"No, no," she said earnestly, "it cannot be. Our duty is the truth; we cannot escape from it. We must know the truth. It will then be ours to decide."

"Then you still hope that the priest will help us?"

"I know not what to hope. My own faith is unshaken. Jura is my cousin—he has been robbed of his inheritance. It is my duty to restore it. If he asks me, I will follow him into banishment; I will give my whole life to undo the wrong that has been done. Call it madness, folly, quixotic impulse—I do not care. He is my kinsman, and I will be faithful to him."

The Englishman did not reply immediately. He had quite expected some supreme sacrifice upon her part, but he was not prepared for this fashion of it. It may be that her candour inspired him anew to greater confidence. This was not a confession from the heart; these were not the words of a woman who loved. He perceived that the victory had been won over her pity, and that pity now dictated this abandonment.

"It is a noble thought," he admitted presently, "but I am still doubtful. I would say no word to deter you if I were sure that this is the best way of helping your cousin. But reflect—you would sacrifice your own fortune by such an act. These mines are a national trust. The Government draws many thousands a year from them. There would be Government intervention, the Emperor's intervention as against an adventurer. It is evident to me that your cousin has no pleasure of life as he is. Are you sure that he would be happier in another country? It may be so, but are not your friends permitted to doubt?"

"They may doubt when they speak of him as an adventurer. I did not expect that from you."

"But I am merely the *advocatus diabolicus*—I speak as Society will speak. There is no *via media*. He is either the man or an impostor, and as one or the other he will be judged. The world rarely discusses any man's history unless it is disgraceful. Our past becomes important only when our present is in the newspapers. You must be prepared for this when the priest has spoken."

"Oh," she exclaimed, rising impatiently, as though delay were intolerable, "I need no preparation; I ask but the truth. Jura knows the alternative, and I believe that he will accept it. If he does, I shall go with him; my resolve is firm, and nothing will shake it. I shall follow him until we discover the Eldorado which does not punish for the sins of the fathers, and brands no honest man with infamy for a crime committed by others against his childhood. That is my resolution, and this letter bears witness to it. If you are in Vienna, I charge you to make it public. There is no other who may be willing to defend my name, none who so well understands me. To you, then——"

She ceased to speak, hearing a sound in the anteroom, but he took the letter swiftly from her hand, and at the same moment her cousin entered the room softly and bowed with simple dignity to the guest whose friendship he understood. He was clad like Lord Amblehurst in plain evening-dress, which sat ill upon his massive figure, and an observer might have remarked that his likeness to the great Count Philip had surrendered some of its fidelity in these days of doubt and hazard, and that Jura of the mine was not the Jura of the Erlach Palace. With it all, a certain majesty remained and a power of the wonderful eyes which might have magnetised the least sensitive.

He crossed to Ulusia's side, and she, taking a pink rose from a vase, handed it to him with a pretty smile. No stranger would have guessed by their commonplace talk that this was the hour of finality, the hour when all should be won or lost by one man's decree and a verdict pronounced which should send a new lord to Rabka or condemn a felon to lifelong imprisonment. Yet such it was, and as the coming minutes were to write it in the story of Philip von Erlach and of his house.

A bell reverberated in the corridor, and Count Rudolph entered. He wore the green uniform of a Galician regiment, and carried a hussar's busby in his hand. His manner was less arrogant than of yore and seemed coloured by no little anxiety. In truth, he asked himself as he entered if the priest would keep faith with him or recant even at this the eleventh hour. To Ulusia he paid an unusual compliment.

"Your octagon was never so beautiful," he said quietly; "I shall remember that pink roses are your emblem."

She answered that all flowers were her emblem, and turned to Lord Amblehurst as though in mute appeal. He, however, was diverted already by the Count's sudden reference to Bosnia and the benefits which had come to it by Austria's suzerainty; and while the two discussed it, Ulusia went over to Jura's side and began to speak very earnestly to him, but in so low a tone that even Rudolph's suspicions could make nothing of her confidence. In this way five minutes were numbered. It was exactly three minutes past ten when a footman opened the middle door of the octagon and announced the Prior of Jezero and the Brother Arthur, and from that instant the very ticking of the clocks was a loud sound in the room.

They came in together, the younger man supporting the blind monk and waiting upon his halting steps. Behind them walked the Prefect of Jajce in his uniform, and with him the Chief of the Police of the city, and these in their turn were followed by General

Wagner, the Notary Public, and the lawyer Kreisner, who had represented the house of von Erlach since Count Philip's death. When all had entered and the servant had withdrawn, a circle was formed about the spacious apartment and the other doors were closed. It was natural that the chief seat should be accorded to the blind monk, and to this General Wagner led him with some solicitude, arranging the cushions deliberately and begging him to rest a little while before he spoke. The others stood round about, waiting for some leader to put them at their ease. They understood that a tense moment was upon them, and would not hasten it.

Jura the Wise had been standing by Ulusia's side when the monk entered, and now he rested immobile, as though his mind were held in trance by some re-birth of outlived years and all the present scene blotted out. Gazing earnestly at the old man's face, his own lost, as it were, the stamp of years and became almost that of a boy. Many emotions swayed him, but chiefly the emotion of a vivid memory, which transported him in an instant from this house of riches to the very depths of Rabka's mine, sent him again as a savage of cave and river; rebuilt a house in the darkness and heard there a teacher's voice. But a whisper at first, the voice gained strength each moment until its persistent summons overpowered his will, and with a loud cry of "Father!" he stretched out his arms as though to ask a blessing, and was in an instant at the blind monk's feet.

"Father, do you not know me? I am Jura—whom you called son. Do you not know me?"

The monk caught the outstretched hand and pressed it in his own. As he felt the upturned face, stroked the hair, and listened eagerly to the passionate entreaty, his features relaxed and fear passed from them.

"You are my son, Jura. Yes, yes, how could I deny you? You are my son, and I give thanks to God for bringing you to me again."

A curtain, as it were, of the darkness of Rabka dropped for an instant before Jura's eyes, and he swayed and rocked beneath the hand which cherished him. Oh, if he could but cry aloud before them all, utter that supreme protest upon the wrong which had been done him—compel the truth in one mighty sentence which should justify him utterly! But the words failed him; he tried to speak, and his dry lips uttered no sound. And then he heard General Wagner's voice, and his heart seemed to stand still while the response was uttered.

"You know why we have sent for you, Father?"

"Yes, yes. I am a very old man, and I cannot help you."

"It is necessary, in the interests of justice, that you tell us what you know. You educated a child in the mine at Rabka. Whose son was he?"

"He was the son of the lord Philip—I have said it."

"And his mother?"

The monk ceased to speak. All had drawn near to catch his words, the soft candle-light fell upon agitated faces and lips which trembled; even Rudolph of Trieste had forgotten his cynic's *rôle*.

"The name of the child's mother? It is necessary that we know it. Have you not taught the people that Count Philip left a son whose heritage could not be disputed? We are here to-night to question you concerning this. Is it true or false, Father?"

He remained unanswered; not a sound but that of the priest's heavy breathing broke in upon the silence. Ulusia stood very still by the chimney; Lord Amblehurst bent his head and would not look at her. Jura alone continued to search the old priest's face, as though some story of pity would yet be written upon it.

"My mother's name," he cried hoarsely—"tell me my mother's name?"

They waited for the monk to speak; but, stretching out his hands suddenly, he uttered a loud cry and fell dead into the arms of the man he had called his son.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HARRY VILLIERS CALLS UPON HIS FRIEND.

HARRY VILLIERS from the Embassy called upon his old friend, Lord Amblehurst, at the Métropole Hotel upon the morning following the tragic occurrence at the Erlach Palace.

They had not met for some years—not, indeed, since the old Cambridge days, when young Villiers was the finest racquet player in the "Varsity," and Amblehurst had been as clever. From the same house at Eton they went to Cambridge in the same year, saw much of each other in London afterwards, and then were separated by that inexorable call of "service" which breaks so many fine friendships and often secures but a pauper's recompense.

Villiers went for the diplomatic; had been



"Fell dead into the arms of the man he had called his son."

some time in Constantinople, and was now in Vienna. A confidential mission to Buda prevented him meeting Amblehurst hitherto, but he called upon him immediately he returned, and was astonished at the nature of the welcome which awaited him.

He found Amblehurst in his private sitting-room, apparently an unwilling prisoner of the house. No common salutation, no merely conventional exclamation of pleasure attended the reunion, but such a cry of satisfaction as might have escaped a general when a relief column had been discerned upon a far horizon.

"Harry Villiers at last! My dear fellow, the minutes have been hours; and there was nobody else. I am glad, indeed; I knew you would not fail me."

Harry Villiers, a florid fellow with the face of a hunting squire, set down his hat upon a sofa and regarded his old friend with wondering eyes.

"But, my dear chap, I have been at Buda. Of course, I would have come before if I had known you wanted me."

"Wanted you? But it is fixed for to-morrow. And I know nobody but the Count Debenska, who has gone to see them. Don't you see that they are making me look a fool? What else could I have done? I was warned that he would not take it lying down. General Wagner has been to the Hofburg, and they think it is the best way out. Of course, the Government having displaced him——"

"My dear Gascoigne, what in Heaven's name are you talking about?"

"Then you have not received my letters, my telegram——"

"I have just come from Buda. Your telegram I read, your letter is in my pocket."

"Then read it now—read it, Harry. I will not speak a word until it is read, upon my word of honour. Sit there and read it. You may call me a wise man or a fool afterwards, as your judgment dictates."

Villiers took the letter from his pocket, and, drawing a chair near the window, he read it to the last line. When he had done, his face was quite white and his manner fallen suddenly to seriousness.

"I heard something of this at Buda. A claimant had arisen to the Rabka mine, but they believed him to be an impostor. Rudolph of Trieste is very well known to us. He bears a bad name. If you were an Austrian, you would have to get permission to fight. As it is, no one will interfere. What are you going to do, Gascoigne?"

"What am I going to do? What would you do, Harry? Pack your traps and leave Vienna to grin? What would you do? Fight. And so will I, by Heaven!"

"I think you are wise, Gascoigne. He attributes his downfall to your intervention. Did you go to Hofburg yourself?"

"I saw the Kaiser myself yesterday morning at eleven o'clock. While the papers were discussing the so-called mystery of the man Jura, I was telling the Emperor the truth. The fellow is the son of Count Philip and of a gipsy named Djala, who came from Esseg in Hungary. The old Count married her in a fit of imbecility after his wife's death; the priest who died last night celebrated the wedding in the chapel at the mine. He was the real author of this affair—he was the man they should have punished. I have kept the thing close because our impostor is one of the best and kindliest of men. He must not know the tragedy of his mother's story. But I spoke pretty freely of Rudolph's little game and of the methods he employed before the insurrection. He is to go, and General Wagner, an honest man, takes his place. Naturally, I am held to account. Rudolph sent his friends here two hours ago, just an hour after he received the official intimation. They tell me I have choice of weapons, but that it would be murder to go out with their man and name rapiers. He has forgotten how to fence, and some fool says I am a master. I shall choose pistols. The rest is with you. Do what you please. Of course, Debenska will bear the brunt. I understand that the Embassy must know nothing of your share, and you must count upon me there, Harry."

Villiers debated an instant. What should a friend rightly do in these circumstances? What was his duty to one whose friendship had been among his most precious things of life? A clear voice answered that a meeting was inevitable; it was a voice speaking from the old school and telling him that honour permitted no alternative.

And yet the burden of it? Well he knew the nature of a duel in this stern capital. Here honour healed no scratches, nor were sorry farces played in honour's name. If these men fought, but one would return. He believed it to be so, but had no courage to speak of it.

"You are quite determined, Gascoigne?"

"My dear Harry, look at me and ask again."

Their eyes met—no other word was

spoken—and Harry Villiers turned about and went upon his errand.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ULUSIA HEARS THE NEWS.

BISHOP HEINRICH of Strepitza had arrived in Vienna upon the morning of the day following the arrest of Jura; but he did not put in an appearance at the Erlach Palace until late in the afternoon, and it was with difficulty that he persuaded Ulusia to see him.

The Bishop believed that he had a shrewd knowledge of women, laying it down with much satisfaction that they are creatures of ephemeral impulse, and that of all their supposed sentiments the sentiment of love is commonly the shallowest.

Ulusia he regarded as a mere child, caught for a moment by a child's caprice and deserving of correction. It had been an ugly scandal, but not so ugly that reparation was impossible. For had not a Princess bolted with her music-master that very winter, and was the story of the Baroness Frederick, who married her chauffeur in New York, yet unforgotten? These riper frailties pleased the good Bishop very much when he recollected them, and he imagined that the *affaire Erlach* would be a nine days' wonder at the worst.

True, she appeared to have suffered. Her face was very pale, her eyes red with weeping, when she appeared before him in the library. Her manners had ever been haughty and little prone to revere ecclesiasticism, and this night he perceived had not mended them. When he told her that he had come to offer what spiritual consolation he could, she laughed in his face—the hard laugh of a woman who had learned the lesson of the salons.

"I thank you, uncle," she said, "but are you not very late, and do you return to Strepitza to-night?"

He looked at her reproachfully.

"My dear child, I am come to spend many happy weeks in your house, I hope. Am I not welcome, then?"

"Most welcome. And since I am about to leave it——"

"To leave it—upon what errand?"

"Oh, Heaven knows!" she exclaimed passionately. "Do you not see that I am not able to talk to you to-day? Why do you question me?"

"My dear Ulusia, we must bear our troubles patiently. Consider, your goodness of heart has led to your being deceived by an impostor. It was plain that the priest could not justify these wicked pretensions, for, if he could have done——"

"Oh, cease, cease!" she cried. "Am I not weary?" And she buried her face in her hands and sobbed aloud.

He forbore a little while, playing with the golden cross about his neck, and praying for her silently and with a good man's earnestness.

Anon, seeing her a little more composed, he told her something he thought would interest.

"I have just come from General Wagner. You know that he is going to Rabka as Governor, and that the man Jura is permitted to return to the mines. The people expect it, and will not be denied. I am afraid, my dear, that their faith in you has been lost these latter days. They hoped so much from you; they were so willing to regard you as the lord Philip's niece, who would bring them salvation."

She heard him impatiently. This was not the hour when any judgment upon her own conduct could be uttered, and, in truth, she did but remember that Jura would return to Rabka.

"To the mines? But they told me——"

"The Kaiser has intervened. We do not understand it, but I think it is the work of your English friend. Count Rudolph believes as much. Naturally, it is a great rebuff for him, and the story that the men are to meet to-morrow is already known. I am sorry for the Englishman, who means well, but I can well understand the Count's displeasure. Indeed, my child, there is much mystery here, and I am afraid the whole story will never be known to us——"

He paused, observing that Ulusia heard him no longer. She had been as one dazed all day, but this was the hour of awakening. He, her friend, who had played so brave a part, must still bear her burdens, even, as it would appear, in the face of death. Asking nothing, sending no message, he would yet go out in her name and defend the honour of her house. The nobility of it appealed to her strangely.

The Englishman, this new friend, come so strangely into her life, would defend her against the city and the world. Far from being alone, at this moment of despair, she had found an advocate of whom even her enemies spoke with respect. From the others there had been words abundant, but this man

offered deeds silently, without claim or condition. And for her, Ulusia von Erlach, he was willing to defy the scruples of his countrymen and to risk his life in an affair of honour which would provoke his own people to derision. The measure of her own responsibility weighed heavily upon her in that hour. Where did the path of her duty lie? How could she help him?

"Oh, there has been mystery enough!" she exclaimed presently. "Tell me the truth! Does he indeed meet the Count to-morrow?"

"They are saying so at the barracks, my child. General Wagner believes it to be true. Lord Amblehurst could scarcely do less. In Vienna one does as Vienna does. I do not think Society would receive him afterwards if he avoided this. And, naturally, he has some idea of remaining among us."

She understood the allusion, accompanied as it was by a kindly smile of satisfaction which illumined the old man's face. The Bishop believed this to be inevitable; he approved of it in the interests of the house. And he would do nothing to avert it—of that Ulusia was sure.

She escaped from him at last, disdaining excuses, and sent for her servant Karl, who had been at the Erlach Palace nigh forty years and was worthy of her confidence. To him she told her story in a few words. He must go to the Hôtel Métropole and learn what he could there; then to the barracks and to Count Rudolph's hotel. She did not conceal her anxiety. The English noble who had been their guest was embroiled in an affair of honour with his Excellency Count Rudolph. They were to meet to-morrow. Karl must find out the circumstances. She relied upon him and would not fail to reward his diligence; but haste was necessary, and he must go at once. To which he replied by a protest of his gratitude that she should have chosen him for such an embassy, and immediately quitted the Palace to do her bidding.

This would have been about seven o'clock. Ulusia dined with the Baroness Elwitza at eight, and spent an hour at the opera afterwards. A desire to assert herself before the city, to show that her courage remained and that she was indifferent to the tongues which maligned her, dictated this daring visit. She was the cynosure of envious eyes at all times, and such a visit at such a moment, when the *affaire Erlach* was the one topic both of slander and curiosity, amazed both friends and enemies. Her box was thronged by protestants who would have given their very jewels for a knowledge of the truth. Men who once had hoped to spend the fortunes of Rabka, in exchange for pretty assumptions of a devouring passion, came like vultures hovering for bones. Soldiers, diplomats, the froth of the social whirlpool gathered about her and ventured many a bolt at random, to be disappointed and astonished. For Ulusia there was no *affaire Erlach*, the women said, and the men added that she was a hard-hearted little minx.

She returned to her house at ten o'clock and asked immediately for Karl. The reply was that he had been seen for a few moments at half-past nine, but had gone out again at once. This was not unexpected, but it disappointed her, nevertheless; and giving instructions that she was to be informed of the hour of his return, she went to her bedroom and sat by the open window waiting for the news. What course she would pursue when she had it was beyond her imagination to say. She felt, however, that knowledge would be satisfaction, and that want of knowledge implied an indifference which was inexcusable. He must know of her gratitude; he must understand that she was unable to repay.

She was but a child, and Fortune had written a tragic page for her. A few months ago she had left the convent in this very city, going out to great riches and a position which princes would have envied. To-night she was a woman schooled in suffering, but with the responsibilities heavy upon her. Now for the first time awakened to a new sense of her position by the words which old Bishop Heinrich had uttered, she remembered Rabka and its hold upon her. The debt that she owed to her father's name, the just claim of these children of the darkness, were voiced suddenly as though by the great lord himself, Philip the Magnificent, by whom the heritage had come. Had he stood in the room with her, risen from the grave to plead for the people of the mine, this suggestion of command and entreaty could not have been more real. She must go to those who had most need of her. Whatever her craving for the social successes with which Vienna might reward her, whatever the possibilities and glories of her riches as the city estimated them—these must be sacrificed if the name of Philip von Erlach were to be honoured and the majesty of his house maintained.

It was a warfare of the soul, a reckoning with self which none, perchance, but this daughter of the Lords of Rabka would have

carried to its just conclusions. Ulusia perceived that all this chaos of plan and intention would be ordered in an instant if she were willing to make the supreme sacrifice and return with Jura to the mines. And abetting her awakening purpose was the more womanly remembrance of her sentiment towards this man while he was a leader of the people, of the influence he had exercised upon her and the submission to his influence which gave her pleasure.

What had been might be again if this distorted view of life which Vienna presented were focussed by her sacrifice and made real by her determination. Let her go to Rabka and forget that Gascoigne, the Englishman, would carry her from her inheritance to a new people and a new country, where even the name of Rabka might be forgotten. It would be hard to make this intention known to him, and yet her courage did not flinch from the ordeal. She would go at dawn; she would be guided by the dead, whose voice she did not dare to disobey.

Upon this purpose she dwelt during the long night, when sleep was denied to her and her servant did not return to the Palace. The dawn found her still dressed—a wondrous dawn of an Eastern summer's day, when the white buildings of the Ringstrasse shone resplendent in the pure ether, and the sunlight searched out every blossom in the gardens beneath her window. She had suffered much during the night of waiting, but the day tortured her almost beyond endurance; and she fell to a thousand speculations as to Karl's absence, wondering if harm had befallen him or he had been intercepted.

It was six o'clock by this time and the city astir. She heard the bells of the electric trams and the whistles of the distant locomotives. Religious were going to church, and chimes ringing from many steeples. The message of the new day, usually speaking of hope and action, won no response from her. In a fever of impatience she paced the gardens, asking why Karl had not returned. This was a question to which she obtained no answer until nine o'clock; at which hour her old servant appeared, and disdaining all apologies, told her without preface that she would find my lord at the house of Prince Kreslin, which lies just beyond the Prater upon its eastern boundary.

"I am to tell no one else but your Excellency," the old man said. "A great misfortune has happened, and I think that Lord Amblehurst would wish to see you."

Her response was to order her carriage to be brought to the door immediately. She was at the Kreslin Palace twenty minutes later.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IN PRINCE KRESLIN'S GARDEN.

It had been a quarter to six of the morning when Harry Villiers arrived at the Métropole Hotel, and a quarter of an hour later when the party set out for Prince Kreslin's house. A fine summer's day showed them streets already busy as they drove by the Danube and thence turned into the Prater. None, however, remarked the circumstance, and hardly a word was spoken until their journey's end.

Men come suddenly to the brink of peril and often fail to understand whither their journey is leading them. Life and death are discussed in common terms, but rarely with a deeper thought of their meaning or of that swift reckoning which the fear of death inspires. Sometimes a man will stand an instant to remember that the end must be, the hour when all shall be accomplished, the beginning of that unknown which can inspire terror, but is not wanting in hope. But, wisely, he gropes his way blindly for the most part, content to cry "Kismet!" despite his profession.

It would not be true to say that Gascoigne, Earl of Amblehurst, understood wholly the issue he had invited upon that summer's morning. It would have been impossible for him to believe that in less than an hour all this scene about him might have ceased to be so far as he was concerned; that he would lie inanimate, repulsive to men and shunned by them. If a suggestion of this entered into his calculations, he put it aside instantly and had will enough to ignore it. Perhaps he admitted that, but for a woman, no circumstance would have led him to the folly. Here he was, he who had derided the *farceurs* of the Bois, hastening to imitate them, because circumstances had embroiled him in an affair whose only interest was the interest a pretty woman cared to find in it. More seriously he admitted that this view also savoured of the jest. He knew that he had made no mistake where Ulusia von Erlach was concerned.

The carriage was driven rapidly through the Prater, and at half-past six precisely came

to Prince Kreslin's house. They had promised an earlier meeting, and excused themselves upon the score of a coachman's negligence, a topic which served when the first exchange of compliments had passed. The Prince, it appeared, was in Paris, but had telegraphed his consent to the meeting; and, as Count Debenska hastened to say: "There is really nothing else to settle, gentlemen."

To this all agreed. The cynicism which remembers the safe part played by all but two in an "affair of honour" is but little known in Vienna, where men are aware that death is often in the scale and the shadow of death upon those who stand round about. So there were white faces discovered beneath the trees by the Prater that morning, subdued voices and the hesitating steps of men who could not rid themselves wholly of the burdens which their friends had taken up.

It was to be a duel with pistols in the accepted fashion of the barracks. Three shots were to be exchanged at a distance of twenty paces, and either antagonist was permitted to fire as soon as the word was given, or to delay if he chose. A high wall of white stone shut the garden in from the wilder walks of the Prater. They fought upon a tennis-court, near by which was a fountain with a spray of clear water casting jewels to the sunshine.

Count Debenska and Harry Villiers were acting for Lord Amblehurst, and two officers from a regiment of Guards for Count Rudolph. He wore his uniform of hussars and bore himself with a new dignity to which misfortune had schooled him. Amblehurst, on the other hand, treated the affair with that ready nonchalance which is characteristic of his countrymen, speaking in brief sentences and taking his directions as quietly as a player upon a field. Where was he to stand? What would the word be? Was it customary to fire at once? Were there other things he ought to know? His movements were brisk and active.

He glanced at the pistol they put into his hand and immediately took his station. The Count, in his turn, made the closest examination of his weapon. He appeared to be very anxious, and once or twice he looked behind him, as though to be sure that no one was standing there.

It had fallen to Count Debenska to give the word, and he now took up his position by a fine chalk line which had been drawn upon the dewy grass. The surgeons, two of them from the hospital, withdrew to the shelter of a cypress at the far end of the tennis-court and there discussed, or pretended to discuss, a common topic of the schools. The Count's seconds were upon his right hand some fifteen paces removed from him. A pergola with roses in full bloom shut off this tennis-court from the Italian garden proper, but the upper storeys of the Prince's house were visible above it, and Amblehurst clearly perceived some servants standing at one of the windows.

It was odd how trifles impressed themselves upon his memory at this moment of the issue. An old tennis player, he found himself looking for the marking of the court, then away to the pergola with its pink roses—the roses which Ulusia loved. Outside beyond the wall a lad was singing a snatch from a comic opera, and the Englishman recalled the scene wherein the music had occurred—a ridiculous scene and one Vienna had found tedious. Of the affair itself he seemed to form no part. True, a man stood before him, at a distance of twenty paces, and that man held a pistol in his hand. The attitude struck him as ridiculous, and to this succeeded an unprovoked sense of the farcical nature of it all, perhaps even of its criminality.

A voice cried "Fire!" and he raised his pistol and discharged it anyhow. When he heard a bullet sing by his ear, he jerked his head instinctively and then smiled at himself because he had done so. The interval of waiting appeared to be very long; he could have sworn that five minutes passed before they put another pistol into his hands and directed him again to his station. He thought of Ulusia at this moment, and for just an instant wondered what she would have said if that bullet had killed him. Then the word was given and he pulled his trigger, indifferently as before, and this time he did not even hear the hum of the answering bullet. "Heavens, what a farce to play!" he cried aloud. But Harry Villiers said "Hush, hush!" and put a third pistol into his hands.

Impatience was now the dominating note—a desperate desire to have done with it, to escape this scene of shams and to hide from those who had helped him to play it. He was conscious of a deep, personal humiliation, of regret that he should submit himself to such an ordeal, and of a desire for life which became passionate. Oh, he must see Ulusia—he must see her again! He could rage against the destiny which denied him this, clamour for it ignominiously, and even beg the pity

of his friends. And then upon it all he heard the word spoken and fired as before. No bullet answered him. He did not understand that the Count had claimed his privilege and was waiting. He would have turned away but for Harry's loud cry of warning—a cry followed immediately by a blow, as it were, of a hammer upon his right arm and side, which were scorched as though burning iron had been laid upon his flesh.

He staggered at the shot, reeled into Harry's arms, and so fell forward upon the grass, while the surgeons ran to him. The Count, hurried away by his friends, was already leaving the scene; but Amblehurst still heard the distant voice of the lad singing, and looking up to the windows of the house, he perceived that the servants still watched him with curious eyes.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ULUSIA DECIDES.

HARRY VILLIERS met Ulusia at the door of Prince Kreslin's house and asked her to go up.

"The surgeons are dead against it," he said, "but Gascoigne insists. Please do not stop long. He is not badly hurt, but he must be kept quiet. If he hadn't turned round to speak to me at the wrong minute, he would not have been hit at all. I fear he will not be able to use his right arm for a long time. The bullet entered at the wrist and then struck the bone. That's how he got wounded in the side also, but the surgeons think nothing of it. What they are frightened about is the arm. You won't stop long, will you? We can talk when you come down, and arrange what is to be done."

She bent her head and entered the bedroom. Already she had given instructions that a room was to be prepared at the Erlach Palace, and her servants had driven back with the order. What no one guessed was the nature of the ordeal she had suffered while they drove her to Prince Kreslin's house.

Prone to extremes of intuition, she had chosen to say that Gascoigne was dead or dying, they had summoned her because the worst had happened, and that he had paid the ultimate penalty for her sake. Harry Villiers' words sent her to the room with fearful tread and eyes averted. She was hysterical, but still had command of herself.

They had drawn the bed to the window, which stood wide open, and a perfume of sweet flowers came up from the garden; the noises of the distant streets contrasted strangely with the stillness of the house. One of the surgeons, Dr. Klein, from the hospital, still sat at the bedside, but made way upon her entry. He raised his finger as though to caution her, and then she perceived that Lord Amblehurst had fallen into a doze. From this her soft step instantly awakened him. He opened his eyes and watched her with an earnestness she would not forget until her life's end.

"How did you know?" he asked, in a low voice. "I forbade them to tell you."

She sat by the bed, whither his hand drew her, and shook the curls from her forehead.

"They did not tell me; I sent my servants to find out. My uncle was at the Palace last night."

"Oh," he exclaimed almost wearily, "it has all been very foolish; I am glad it is done with. Agree not to talk about it, Ulusia, since you are here."

"They give me merely minutes," she rejoined quietly. "Is there anything I can do when I go away?"

"If you must go, Ulusia?"

He turned about in the bed and fixed his eyes upon hers, his hand closed tightly upon her own.

"If you must go? The surgeons promise me liberty in three or four days. I have to leave for England in ten. If you must go?"

She knew not what to say. Her heart beat wildly, and almost in despair she turned to Dr. Klein.

"I wish to speak to Lord Amblehurst," she said. "Will you permit me, doctor?"

Some minutes of silence passed, during which Amblehurst continued to watch her with ardent eyes. Had she come hither to utter those words for which he had waited so patiently during the long weeks of service—to tell him that she loved him and would be his wife? He had believed so for an instant; but something in her manner, her embarrassment, her evident distress, warned him that the night had changed her and that this was not the Ulusia of yesterday.

"What has happened?" he asked quickly. "Why do you fear to speak, Ulusia?"

"I am not afraid," she said quietly. And then: "If my words could repay you——"

"Repay me? Do men, then, ask recompense from the women they love?"

"Oh, no, no, but it is not the same. All

is changed, Gascoigne ; nothing remains but your friendship. Did you not guess as much when I came to you ? Did not something tell you that it must be so ? "

He looked at her almost accusingly.

" I went to the Emperor," he said, " to obtain clemency for your cousin. They will have told you that he is not your uncle's heir. But he is to return to Rabka and to be given a post there. Could I have done more ? Is not the mine the proper home for him ? "

" As it is for me. Cannot you admit that now ? If he goes, I must go. As it is his duty to return, so it is mine."

" To return——"

" To my father's people, to my inheritance. I have no alternative ; it is my duty."

He moved impatiently in his bed.

" Is it a woman's duty to take a man's task upon her shoulders at the bidding of sentiment ? What is there you can do which cannot be better done by a man ? Were you born to live your life in the darkness, Ulusia ? I refuse to believe it."

" And yet you understand me," she said, looking him full in the face. " You have been expectant of this from the first, Gascoigne. I knew it when you went into Bosnia ; I was sure of it when you returned. You knew that the call would come to me, and I should obey it when it came. Well, the night has brought it—the night which told me of your intention. I cannot say why it should be so, for these things are not to be explained ; but I could not mistake it . . . . and I am going as the call commands me. You will not forbid me, Gascoigne. On the contrary, I believe you will wish me 'God-speed.' "

He had no answer to make. The truth of it all seemed as a wonder story, and yet he could not deny her. These weeks in Vienna would be remembered as long as he lived, tragic in their issue and leaving behind this enduring memory of his doubts and hopes and fears for her. Yes, truly had he known that if the call came to her, if this jargon of duty were the obstacle, then, indeed, were his own cause wrecked irretrievably. And it had come as he feared ; this was the hour of it.

" You will return to Rabka," he exclaimed at length, " and then ? "

" I shall do what I can for my people."

" Is that a task in which I can give you no assistance ? "

" You know that it is not, Gascoigne."

" I know nothing except that you are leaving me."

" And will forget that when I am gone."

She would have turned it with a laugh, perceiving that the moment was dangerous, and herein she showed wisdom, for a word might have brought a passionate retort adding to the burden of her memories. Sufficient that he should know what a precious thing his friendship had been, and how it would be remembered through the years of the labyrinth. Just as last night she had heard the voice of her ancestry calling her, so now did the same voice shut her heart to the promptings of a woman's pity and send her forth alone. By suffering would the way be won, and by self-sacrifice.

" Yes," she said, " you will forget, but Ulusia von Erlach will remember always." And so speaking she stooped and kissed him on the lips, and then was gone immediately from the room and the house.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

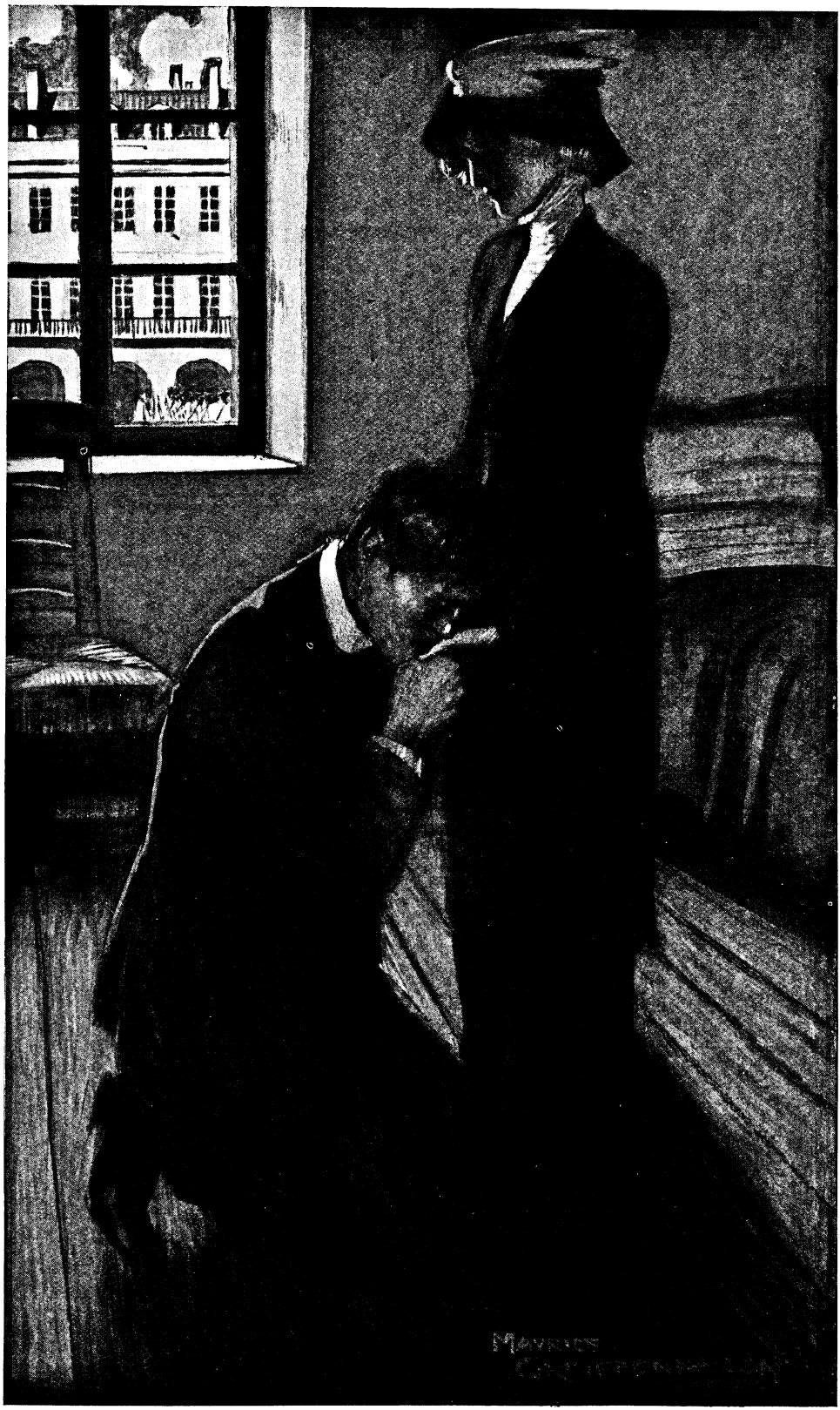
A CALL OF THE BLOOD.

THE windows of the room opened upon the great square of the barracks, and therefrom Jura could see the soldiers at their drill and hear the sonorous words of command uttered by the white-coated sergeants.

He had no idea of the time nor of the hours which had passed since they brought him to this place ; but he remembered that it had happened at the dead of night, and that General Wagner had been one of those who gave the police their orders. " To the Kaserne," he had said, and this in face of Count Rudolph's desire that it should be to the common prison.

For the rest, his mind played sorry tricks with him. Certain events of yesterday were remembered with wonderful clearness ; others but hazily or not at all.

Had a question been put to him, he would have said that it began with a rose and a woman's hand guarding it with loving fingers. He remembered the monk's entrance perfectly, and his own astonishment that years should have dealt so ill with him. He could hear the sentence of his doom ringing out as a clarion, for what were silence if not doom and the triumph of his enemies ? Then oblivion intruded ; there had been a long interval of darkness, from which a woman's cry had called him. And he had looked down to see Ulusia lying in a swoon, and to hear General Wagner commanding them to " Take the man away."



"He knelt at her feet in worship."

A cab was called, he recollected, and they drove through the silent streets to these gloomy barracks. They had left him in this room, and he had wished to sleep, that he might escape all recollection of the scene and of the actors therein; but sleep had failed him, and he had kept his vigil by the window, waiting for the dawn and recalling that day of the miracles when he had watched the sun rise for the first time. Ah, he was master then, but now to what depths of shame had he not sunk?

This thought came often and could not be banished. He had been a king of men at Rabka, but Vienna had robbed him of his dominion. Oh, he understood that full well. His ignorance, the circumstances of his birth, his failure to conquer this world of day, had been his undoing. Men mocked him and denied his power. The woman he had worshipped shrank from him sometimes; he could not deny it nor charge her because of it. She shrank from his uncouth speech, which had been a proud possession among the miners of Rabka; she shrank from his awkwardness and habitual melancholy; she did not understand him. And this was to be set down chiefly to the circumstances of his birth and its attendant mysteries. He, who knew that he was the lord Philip's son, how could he command the men who mocked him? What joy could he find in life while the world cried upon him for an impostor? Thus was wrong made manifold; thus were the sins of his fathers visited upon him.

A soldier entered his room at twelve o'clock and brought him his breakfast. The fare was plain and ill-cooked after that of the Erlach Palace; but he ate it with some relish, and was grateful to them for adding to it a cup of coffee and some cigarettes. Indeed, he smoked in some content while he tried to reshape the events of the night and to set them out in better order.

Perhaps he would have expressed some surprise if anyone had reminded him that Ulusia's offer of sacrifice took no place in this survey and did not inspire gratitude. Here the true man spoke against the conventions. He knew that she had done this less of her love than of her sympathy, and determining never to accept it, had dismissed it from his mind as a chimera. The future remained to be the inspiration alike of his hopes and his fears. Would they send him to the prison or banish him? He prayed that it might be banishment, and that in some obscure land he might learn to know himself and to solve the riddle of his life.

He was very weary, and he slept a little during the sunny afternoon, waking about five o'clock and not a little surprised to hear the rustle of a skirt by his bedside. When he turned himself about, he discovered the Lady Ulusia herself watching him as he lay, and with a glad cry of recognition, he stood and held out both his hands.

"Ulusia . . . thou!"

She was dressed as for a journey, in a gown that Paris had made, with a plumed hat upon her head. Flushed by many emotions and not a little embarrassed both by the moment and the environment, she permitted her hands to linger for a moment in his before she answered him; nor had she failed to remark that prison had already changed him and set the seal upon his handsome face.

"Who sent you to this place, Jura?"

"I know not, if it were any other than the lord Count."

"Has no one visited you?"

He answered with dignity—

"I have need of none."

She released her hands and went over to the window, looking across the Kaserne square and watching the soldiers at their drill. Should she speak of the hour of his humiliation or ignore it because of her determination? The priest had condemned; had not she come to save?

"Jura," she said, "the lord Count is leaving Rabka."

"You say——"

"By the Emperor's wish. He is leaving at once, and another will take his place. I hear that the people will have no other leader than Jura the Wise. Do you know of that?"

He took a step towards her and lifted his head proudly.

"Such has been their hope for many years. It would remain unchanged, cousin, whatever was said of me here."

"They ask that a king shall be set over them. They speak of me as one who has forgotten her birthright and sold it to strangers. Shall we permit that, Jura—shall we continue to forget them?"

He knew not how to answer her. Rocking upon his heels and tortured by a great vision, he waited for her to continue.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, turning to him upon an impulse, "is not the path of our duty made plain to us? Have we any right to delay? Our children wait for us, Jura. Shall we not return to them together?"

He tried to speak, stammering a question which would have made understanding easy

to him, and fearful to believe the words he heard.

But it chanced that the sunlight fell upon her face while she stood there, and so wondrous was the spell of her beauty and so noble the picture he beheld that, forgetting all else, he knelt at her feet in worship as once he had knelt upon the mountainside to adore the God of Day.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

RISEN FROM THE ASHES.

THERE had been rumours for some days that Jura the Wise was about to return to Rabka and her people; but these were believed by few in the mine until the officials confirmed the story, and said that he would arrive upon such a night, and that a public welcome would not be forbidden.

This was some hours after the appointment of a new Governor had been made known—a fact for which the children of the depths cared little, inevitable as it was, and speaking of routine; but when they heard that their leader of old time was coming back, and might be received with honour among them, then all phases of the ancient quarrel were forgotten, and no words heard but those which proclaimed the people's victory.

True, there had been days and weeks of bitter misunderstanding, days when they would have named Anna's son for a traitor and killed him for his treachery; other days when they doubted their own judgments and heard with shame that he was a prisoner of the madhouse because of his faith. Upon this came the news of his flight to Vienna, of his public claim to be the lord Philip's son; finally of his failure and arrest. Then truly were the fires of their hostility towards authority rekindled, and there would have been rebellion but for this assurance at the eleventh hour that he was at liberty, and that they might honour him as in the old time.

Of the woman, meanwhile, there were many stories. Some named her for Jura's friend, some for his enemy. The radicals denounced her hotly as a featherbrain who would dissipate her fortune in Vienna and forget the very name of her heritage. Others, again, protested that she alone had saved the chosen and sent him back to them; and this view was confirmed in the end by the Mother Anna herself, who urged them to the welcome and promised them reward beyond their expectations. When the fateful night came, the name of Ulusia von Erlach was heard with that of Jura the Wise; and many were so bold as to say that she would revisit the Castle when it had risen from the ashes and take her proper place as the head of a stately household.

Here was a hope of events remote, and none could be expected to pay much heed to it upon so famous an occasion. The immediate purpose was a welcome to Jura, the comrade, and this they determined should be beyond all precedent magnificent. When the great night came, and it was known that he would arrive from Vienna by the evening train, a mighty throng gathered at the pit's mouth to receive the hero and to conduct him to his house. Dressed in their best, a thousand torches to light the road, the miners waited for the carriage that they might drag their leader out. There was not a *café* in the depths below, not a street which did not blaze with lanterns and echo the strains of merry music. Here was one who had fought the good fight and now returned to his inheritance; pity if his welcome were not such as he had deserved of those he called his brethren.

Now, the train arrived a little after eight o'clock; but the carriage, instead of turning towards the mine, as they had expected, went up towards the Castle, of which a wing had already been rebuilt, and from whose windows light shone for the first time these many months. When the surprise of this had become general, and many were running to the heights for the news, the first bruit of a great rumour was to be heard, and man cried to man that the Lady Ulusia was there, and that she had returned to her people even as they had dared to hope. And this was rumour that spread as a very fire of tow among the multitude, the women catching it up, and even the children repeating the frenzied words to which such tidings gave birth.

She had returned to her own, and by her side stood Jura, her cousin, acknowledged and honoured in that hour of victory. Henceforth these would reign at Rabka; the woman who had turned from the cities of light at the bidding of a phantom voice; the man because this was the heritage, and none might deny what the people acclaimed.

And so it came to be that Ulusia could speak of sacrifice no longer; for just as upon a memorable day of winter she had believed that her destiny was linked with that of Rabka's nameless son, so now did she confirm the judgment, and discover in this man's homage her surest hope of womanhood and heritage.

THE END.

THE INLAND NAVIGATION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY WILLIAM RALPH BALDWIN-WISEMAN.

IV. – RATES.

IT is not infrequently urged by the advocates of canal resuscitation, that the realisation of their projects would result in the development of much new traffic, which the low rates of freight on the reorganised canals would foster; also this rehabilitated transport system would engage in such a strenuous competition for existing classes of traffic with the railways, that the latter would be compelled to reduce their rates so materially that, even if the considerable capital expended in the reconstruction and reorganisation of the old canal system was non-productive in the matter of dividends, its expenditure would be more than justified by the general advantages which would accrue to the trade of the country. This and similar statements are usually amplified by references to the rates per ton mile charged on some American or Continental railroad or waterway, to illustrate that not only are the present railway charges in this country excessively high, but also that the probable charges on the reconstructed canal system would be excessively low; and while such figures may be put forward, in all good faith, as a veritable contrast, one needs to know all the factors included in the particular estimate before one can arrive at a correct conclusion, not infrequently other than the obvious conclusion from the mere statement, as the conditions governing the two cases are generally in no wise comparable. The question of the cost per ton mile, apparently so simple, is in reality one of the greatest complexity, and while its adequate treatment demands the expansiveness of a treatise rather than the brevity of an article such as this, I hope, however, to indicate the more prominent fallacies which frequently beset the majority of these comparative statements.

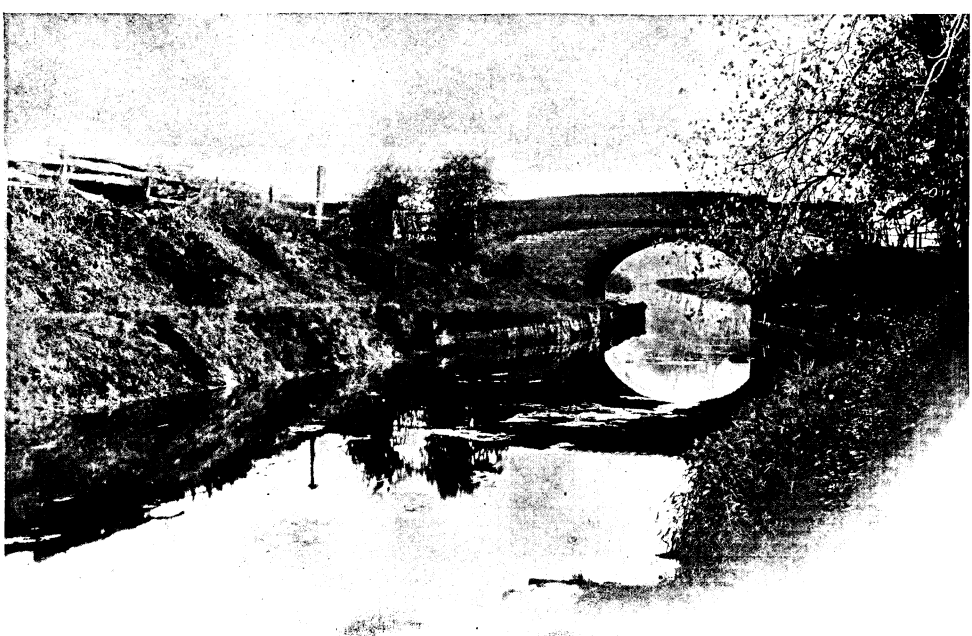


Photo by] [*M. Leon.*

EASTROP BRIDGE, ON THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL.

Theoretically a freight charge should be so proportioned that it will cover the cost of

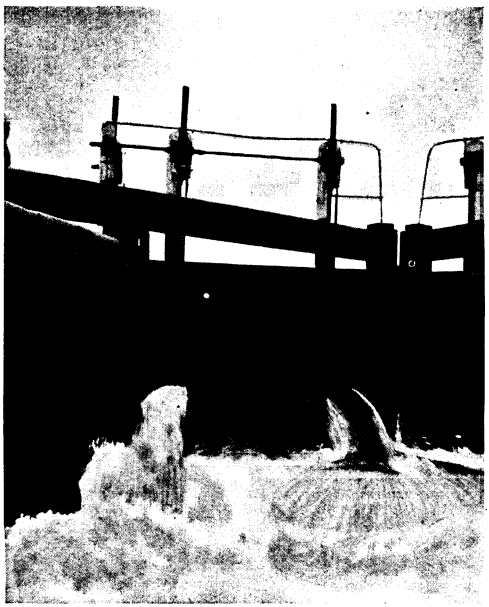


Photo by] [*Clarke & Hyde.*

LOCK GATES ON THE GRAND JUNCTION CANAL.

handling and hauling the particular consignment and provide its due contribution towards the payment of maintenance charges and the interest on capital expenditure ; but it is at once apparent from the most casual consideration of the varying weight, mileage, nature and number of the individual consignments, that such an exact apportionment would be absolutely impossible, even if it were at all desirable.

It has been urged that there should be an equal mileage rate, but a rate cannot be arrived at by the application of any arbitrary formula, based upon distance alone, since no allowance is thus made therein for the location of the line, the cost of the track and the terminal sites, the maintenance charges, the facilities afforded to traders at various points of the system, the efficiency and expedition of the service, the magnitude and nature of the consignment, and the cost of handling it ; such a rate would be grossly inequitable, since it would operate in forcing all the traffic on to the line possessing the shortest route between two industrial centres, to the exclusion of the other lines, which would be unable to offer any effective competition to the short line route, and what is still more important from the consumer's point of view, long distance traffic would be almost entirely suppressed and the inhabitants of any particular district would derive their supplies from the immediate vicinity, at higher prices than now rule, owing to the elimination of the competition of the more distant markets.

Under existing conditions, fish, for instance, can reach the London or Manchester market upon an equal standing, whether consignments are landed at Aberdeen, Great Grimsby, Fleetwood, or Great Yarmouth ; new potatoes are, during the season, carried from the Channel Isles to Southampton, Weymouth, Hull, and Manchester, and are delivered thenceforward in Midland towns, at approximately the same cost per ton, by the various railways serving those ports ; bananas from the West Indies, Central America, and Africa are landed at Avonmouth, Liverpool, Manchester, and Southampton, and are thence rail-borne to inland towns, in which they are sold at a fairly uniform price ; if, however, equal mileage rates were in force, a considerable differentiation in price would arise, according to the difference in route selected, probably sufficient, in some cases, to kill the trade of certain ports altogether.

Again overlooking the relative bulk of consignments, it is frequently urged, although the Earl of Jersey's Committee reported to the contrary effect in 1906, that home industries are prejudicially affected by the



Photo by] [*M. Leon.*

LOCK NEAR WOKING ON THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL.

preferential rates enjoyed by foreign and Colonial competitors, and it is objected that, say beef, loaded in tons, from a ship alongside the quay at Liverpool or Southampton, should be conveyed to London at a lower rate per ton than that for a small consignment of beef, at most a few hundredweights, consigned at any chance time, from some intermediate Cheshire or Hampshire station, for delivery in the same market. In the former case the consignment is of sufficient magnitude to fully load one or more trains, which are run at express speed without stop to London, and delivered immediately upon arrival at the wholesale market; the period of use of the vehicles and the labour of marshalling the train are reduced to a minimum; each car being fully loaded, the ratio of the paying load to the gross load hauled attains its maximum value, and the number of consignors and consignees being but few, entails but a minimum amount of clerical work. On the other hand, the time of the train journey is lengthened by the frequent stops at local stations *en route*, for the receipt and delivery of goods, with a consequent increase per ton of traffic handled, in the clerical work of recording the various transfers; also the consignments are of such a miscellaneous nature, some perishable and others fragile, that it not infrequently happens that a car is only partially loaded, giving rise to a considerable decrease in the ratio of the paying load to the gross load hauled.

In illustration of this it was shown some time ago that bulk traffic consigned from the docks at Southampton to London, at six shillings a ton, was four times more profitable to the London and South Western Railway Company than the traffic for the same destination loaded in small quantities at intermediate Hampshire stations, at fifteen shillings a ton.

In the special case of the London and South Western Railway meat traffic, the consignment is loaded direct from the hold of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's Plate steamers into road wagons, mounted on special trucks, made up into a train, and run to London; upon arrival the wagons are run off these trucks, horsed and driven direct to the market, thus obviating much of the handling from wagon to truck, and *vice versâ*, to which the small consignment must of necessity be subjected.

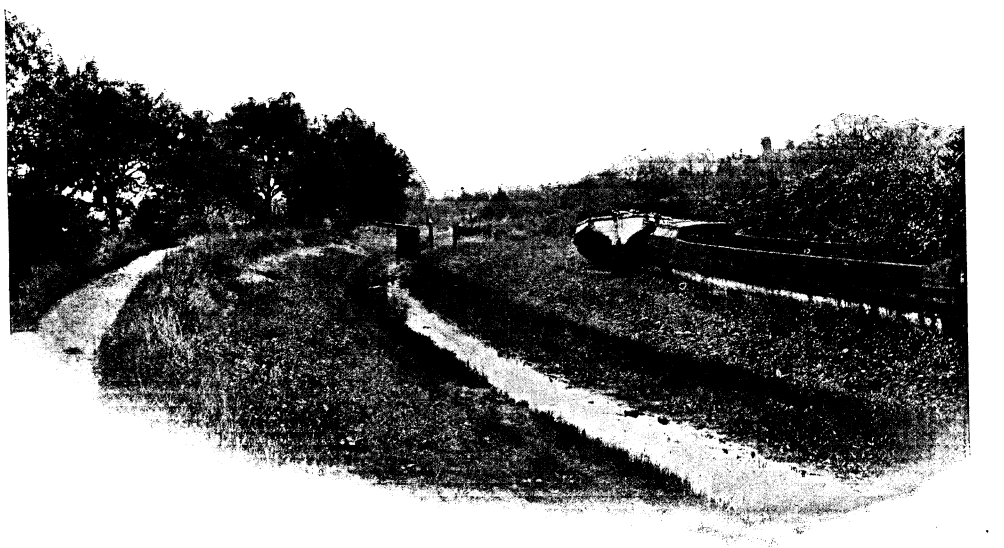


Photo by] [*M. Leon.*

BARGES AND LOCK BY BOW BARGE INN, WOKING, ON THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL.

Once a route is constructed and opened for traffic, its capital and maintenance charges commence to accrue, whether it be used or not, and since the cost of operation, per ton of traffic, tends to vary inversely with the amount of that traffic, it follows that a greater profit will result from a fairly heavy traffic at remuneratively low rates, than from a small traffic at a high rate; but, of course, it is obvious that the first cost and the maintenance charges will seriously influence the rate; it is thus somewhat unfair, neglecting other circumstances, which I shall consider later, to make a comparison between the freight charge per ton mile on an English

and on an American transcontinental railroad. The former, taking, say, the case of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Co., traverses a densely populated area, such as that of south-west Lancashire, where high prices have to be paid for the track and the terminal sites; the equipment of the line with subsidiary works, such as over and under bridges, tunnels, stations, approach roads, sidings, culverts, etc., is particularly heavy; whilst the latter traverses agricultural or prairie land for the greater part of its length. This land is not only cheaply purchased and lightly taxed, but also does not, in general, require such a costly track and equipment to be placed upon it. Even if these differences of capital cost and maintenance did not exist, it would still be grossly inequitable to compare the rate per ton mile for a short haul of a miscellaneous consignment, for a distance of a hundred miles or so, or even less, as in the average English case, with that of a long haul of a heavy uniform consignment, for a distance of a thousand or more miles, as in the average American case quoted; for as the cost of the labour of loading and unloading remains a fixed charge, no matter what the distance may be, and as the operative or running cost per mile run decreases slightly as the mileage increases, it follows that the cost per ton mile will, in general, be subject to a steady decrease as the distance between the terminals materially increases.

Again, the foreign rates generally quoted in such circumstances will be found, upon investigation, to be station to station rates, and before these are at all comparable with the ordinary English rates they should be increased by the amount of the charge levied by the continental parcel express or freight agent companies, for their services in collecting, storing and delivering the consignments



EXPLORING THE GRAND JUNCTION CANAL IN A MOTOR-BOAT.

—services which are, in general, much more efficiently performed by the English railway companies at an inclusive rate. Further, the English companies will make up and despatch a freight train of ten-ton trucks, each carrying loads ranging from half a ton to five tons, and deliver the consignments within twenty-four or forty-eight hours from the time of receiving them, but the continental freight agent will hold back the consignments till he can conveniently fill a truck with its full load, so that a week or more may elapse between the time of collection and delivery, a state of affairs which would not be tolerated for a moment by English traders, who are more and more abandoning methods of wholesale trading, involving heavy capital investment and large warehouse accommodation, and are more and more adopting retail methods, and are relying upon the post and the telephone for the replenishment of their



A POINT AT WHICH THE GRAND JUNCTION CANAL IS BANKED UP TILL IT IS ON A LEVEL WITH THE ROOF OF WEEDON CHURCH, WHICH STANDS AT SIDE.

Two photographs by Clarke & Hyde.

stock with small consignments, the delivery of which is expected within twenty-four or thirty-six hours of placing the order with the manufacturers.

As an illustration of the value which the English companies place upon these services, one company quotes as the ordinary rate for goods belonging to classes 3 and 5, between two towns, 15*s.* and 21*s.* 7*d.* a ton respectively, and 11*s.* and 17*s.* 6*d.* per ton. as the corresponding station to station rates, in this case equivalent to reductions of 26·7 and 19·0 per cent. respectively on the ordinary rates.

Not only is this punctuality in delivery effected by the companies running partially loaded trains, to the depreciation of their own profits, but, in addition, they provide splendid terminal facilities for the sale and handling of coal, vegetable produce and the local industry of a district, such as that of Bradford in Yorkshire, and, further, the public has passenger services of such speed, frequency, and comfort, as no continental nation can parallel.

It is not often sufficiently realised that, owing to the insularity of this country, from one to two-thirds of the railway rates are affected by the competition of sea-borne traffic. In the able annual review of trade, published as a supplement of the *Manchester Guardian*, dated December 31, 1906, it was stated that the shipping, trading direct to Manchester from Belgian, Dutch, and German ports, was subjected to such a keen competition by the railway companies operating steamship lines between the Continental and East Coast English ports, that the rate, for instance, on sugar had been cut down to such a figure that there was no profit in carrying it.

Again considering the case of transatlantic merchandise consigned to London, it might be sea-borne direct to London, or routed *via* Liverpool, Bristol, or Southampton, and rail-borne thenceforward to its destination, and a traffic manager, in quoting for such traffic, must so adjust the rate for the rail-borne portion of the journey that, allowing for the difference in time or passage, the combined rail and sea rate shall not greatly differ from that charged on the direct sea route; similarly goods consigned from northern Europe to, say, Sheffield or Leeds might be landed at several North East Coast ports, between the Tyne and the Humber, and the railway rates from those ports to these inland towns must be so adjusted that the foreign shipper is almost indifferent as to the route by which they are consigned.

Again, as most large industrial centres are not more than ninety miles from the coast, it follows that if a railway rate is excessive, economies can be effected by routing a consignment partly by rail and partly by sea. Thus the third class rate from Manchester to Huntly, a small inland town about forty-two miles from Aberdeen, is 60*s.* a ton, the rate for the same goods, sea-borne from Manchester to Aberdeen and rail forward, is 46*s.* 3*d.* a ton, a saving of just 23 per cent.; or rail-borne between Manchester and Liverpool and between Aberdeen and Huntly, and sea-borne between Liverpool and Aberdeen, is 57*s.* 9*d.* a ton, a saving of about 4 per cent.; similarly the rail-borne rate from Manchester to Wick, for a certain class of goods, is 56*s.* 8*d.* a ton, but the sea-borne rate, although transhipped at Aberdeen, is 37*s.* 8*d.* a ton, and the corresponding rail and sea borne rates between Manchester and Southampton are 52*s.* 6*d.* and 35*s.* a ton respectively for the same class of goods.

It is no unusual experience, in taking the day's collection of a railway company, in any large industrial centre, to find that the average weight of several thousand parcels, collected from various traders' premises by the railway carmen, and also those brought to the companies' district receiving-offices, is well under a hundredweight; each of these parcels has to be weighed, checked with its consignment note, sorted for despatch, loaded, hauled, invoiced, and delivered, entailing a labour cost out of all proportion to the mere cost of carriage; it is for this reason that the rates for smalls—the technical name for all consignments of less weight than 3cwt.—is greatly in excess of the actual rate per ton, appropriate to the classification of the goods and the distance they are hauled, as shown in Table I.

If co-operation were indulged in to a greater extent amongst traders, farmers, market gardeners, and others, the number of consignments could be materially reduced, and the weight per consignment correspondingly increased, with consequent savings in the cost of carriage; for consignments weighing over 3cwt. are carried at the rate per ton quoted, except that, in the apportionment of the charge, odd pounds under 14lb. and between 14lb. and 28lb., are charged as 14lb. and 28lb. respectively, and consignments exceeding 2 tons in weight are carried at reduced rates, with still further reductions when the weight exceeds 4 tons and 10 tons; further, if the goods are sent O. R.—that is, at the owner's risk, instead of

Weight of Consignment in Cwts.	Rate per Ton in Shillings.															
	10s.		20s.		40s.		60s.		80s.		100s.	
	Charge for Smalls.	Equivalent Rate per Ton.	Charge for Smalls.	Equivalent Rate per Ton.	Charge for Smalls.	Equivalent Rate per Ton.	Charge for Smalls.	Equivalent Rate per Ton.	Charge for Smalls.	Equivalent Rate per Ton.	Charge for Smalls.	Equivalent Rate per Ton.
	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.
½ or under.	- 8	1 6 8	- 10	1 13 4	1 7	3 3 4	2 3	4 10 0	2 11	5 16 8	3 8	7 6 8
1 ,, ,, .	- 9	- 15 0	1 4	1 6 8	2 7	2 11 8	3 8	3 13 4	5 0	5 0 0	6 0	6 0 0
2 ,, ,, .	1 4	- 13 4	2 5	1 4 2	4 7	2 5 10	6 9	3 8 4	9 0	4 10 0	11 0	5 10 0
3 ,, ,, .	1 10	- 12 2	3 5	1 2 9	6 7	2 3 10	9 9	3 5 0	12 11	4 6 1	16 0	5 8 8

I. THE CHARGE, AT VARIOUS RATES PER TON, FOR PARCELS OF LESS WEIGHT THAN 3CWT., AND THE EQUIVALENT RATE PER TON CORRESPONDING TO SUCH A CHARGE.

at the company's risk of possible damage in transit—then the class rate is subjected to a reduction of from 10 to 20 per cent.

Now, in the case of the rates on canal-borne freight, as most of the companies, excepting the Aire and Calder, the Bridgewater, the Leeds and Liverpool, the Rochdale, the Shropshire Union, and one or two lesser canal companies, do not act as carriers, but merely take toll of the carrying companies or by-traders using the waterway, the freight charge must include not only the toll levied by the company for the use of the canal and the towpath, but also the cost of operating the barge, maintaining it in repair, and providing a fair return on the barge-owner's capital expenditure, although, in many cases, the owners of single barges, under stress of competition, accept rates which only just cover the bare cost of living and pay for the canal tolls.

Again, as in the case of railway rates, the matter is not capable of exact mathematical treatment; estimates are numerous and varied —firstly, because the canal toll varies with the classification of the goods, and secondly, because various factors may be considered or neglected; one estimate may be based on a voyage over a comparatively long length of broad, deep, and unlocked canal, another over a section which is little more than a series of locks; the method of traction, the depreciation of the tractor and of the boat, which latter is greater on a locked than upon an unlocked canal, the cost of labour in loading and unloading, and the time of the boat on the journey, which is affected by flood, drought, frost, and the dimensions of the canal section, all vitally affect the cost per ton mile; in general, a large steamer will be cheaper to operate than a small horse-hauled barge, the influence of capacity on cost being shown relatively in Table II. If the boat can be run full in both directions, a lower rate per ton can be quoted than that for a single journey, and not infrequently produce a greater profit, as shown in the following hypothetical case, set out in tabular form in Table III.

100 ton	1·000
150 ,,	0·758
200 ,,	0·630
250 ,,	0·553

II. THE RELATIVE COST PER TON MILE OF CARRYING A FULL CARGO, IN STEAM BARGES OF THE ABOVE CAPACITIES, COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE SMALLEST AS UNITY.

Amount of Cargo.	Operating Cost.			Rate per Ton Charged.	Charge.	Profit.
	Outward.	Home.	Total.			
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.
Full Cargo of 20 tons one way	1 0 0	0 7 6	1 7 6	1 6	1 10 0	2 6
Full Cargo of 20 tons both ways	1 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 3	2 10 0	10 0

III. A HYPOTHETICAL CASE.

Economies can also be effected on long reaches of canal, by towing two or more boats, since the cost of traction and of manning the boats does not increase at the same rate as the load hauled, but on a length upon which there are numerous locks, there is little or no economy effected, as the tow has to be broken up at each lock and the boats passed through singly and marshalled on the other side. As the toll paid to the canal company is an integral part of the rate, it is necessary to consider whether the advocates of canal resuscitation intend that the reorganised system shall pay its own way, or be sustained by a rather heavy draft on the pockets of the already heavily burdened taxpayer.

From 1876 to 1885 . .	£120,679	12	6
,, 1886 ,, 1895 . .	255,176	13	1
,, 1896 ,, 1905 . .	298,043	19	4

IV. SHORTAGE AMOUNTS PAID BY THE L.N.W. RAILWAY TO THE BIRMINGHAM CANAL CO.

The following extract from *The Local Government Officer*, dated November 17th, 1906, is quoted here, as it is typical of the latter view :—

"The Chester Corporation have made the following representations to the Royal Commission on Canals and Waterways :—(1) That in many parts of the country it would be advantageous to trade if all people had as free use of waterways as of roads, under proper regulations ; (2) that such free use cannot be possible until the waterways are under the control of the nation ; (3) that it will not be found practicable at present to abolish tolls, but that these tolls should be made as simple and kept as low as possible ; (4) that the routes of national importance should be assisted by the national Exchequer, as main roads are now assisted ; (5) that when, after due inquiry, it can be shown that the improvement or maintenance of a waterway would contribute to the prosperity of any particular county or district, the local authorities of that county or district should have powers to contribute to the cost."

If the canals are ever made toll free, then, of course, freight charges will be low, as any trader desiring to use the waterway will only have to provide a boat and pay its operating cost, and the State will provide the funds for maintaining the waterway, or, in other words, the canal users' trading profits will be in part derived from the pockets of the general taxpayers, the majority of whom will have no opportunity to use the waterway. Numerous estimates have from time to time been made as to the cost of acquiring and reconstructing the canals. Many of these err on the side of smallness, and evidently make but little provision for the purchase of buildings and land, which now abut on the canals, and would have to be acquired in order to afford suitable sites for the construction of turning-basins, lay-byes, wharves, warehouses,

	Period of years from			
	1877 to 1886.	1887 to 1896.	1897 to 1906.	1877 to 1906.
Receipts on Kennet and Avon Canal and River Avon Navigation	£47,588	£57,910	£47,500	£152,998
Expenditure in respect of the Kennet and Avon Canal and the River Avon Navigation	£74,935	£86,561	£85,879	£247,375
Deficit	£27,347	£28,651	£38,379	£94,377
Traffic carried on Kennet and Avon Canal, in tons . .	1,202,182	1,039,409	712,854	2,954,445

V. THE LOSS SUSTAINED BY THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY IN THE WORKING OF THE KENNET AND AVON CANAL AND THE RIVER AVON NAVIGATION SINCE 1877.

Purchase of 3640·3 miles of canal . .	at £11,000 a mile	=	£40,043,000
Reconstruction of 1,000 miles of canal .	,, £30,000 ,,	=	30,000,000
,, ,, 500 miles of canal .	,, £15,000 ,,	=	7,500,000
Improvement ,, 350 miles of river . .	,, £10,000 ,,	=	3,500,000
	Total .		£81,043,000

ESTIMATE 1.

reservoirs, and pumping-stations, the acquisition of mineral rights under the canal, in districts where the canal is liable to subsidence from the operations of mining, the organising of collecting and distributing agencies, etc. The question is an exceedingly complex one, and each section must be specially valued in order to arrive at anything like a correct estimate. The cost of constructing existing canals has ranged from £6,000 to £33,000 a mile, according to the district passed through and the nature of companies with whom they have made agreements. For instance, the predecessors of the London and North Western Railway Company agreed, under the London and Birmingham Railway and Birmingham Canal Arrangement Act of 1846, to make up, in any year, any shortage in a guaranteed dividend of four per cent. on the consolidated stock of the Canal Company, and although, excepting the years 1868 and 1874, no shortage occurred for thirty years, the Railway Company has, under that agree-

Route by Inland Waterway between—		Length in Miles of—						Total Number of Locks on Route.
The Rivers	The Ports	Barge Canals.			Ship Canals.	Rivers or River Navigations.	Whole Waterway.	
		Independent.	Owned or Controlled by Railways.	Total.				
1. Thames & Mersey*	London & Liverpool .	151·5	83·25	234·75	3·25	6·0	244·0	252
2. ,, ,,	,, ,,	149·75	72·5	222·25	12·0	22·0	256·25	190
3. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	162·0	71·0	233·0	12·0	22·0	267·0	282
4. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	173·75	71·25	245·0	12·0	6·0	263·0	256
5. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	147·5	83·5	231·0	3·25	6·0	240·25	226
6. ,, Severn	,, Avonmouth	—	86·5	86·5	—	91·0	177·5	130
7. ,, ,,	,, Sharpness .	35·75	—	35·75	8·5	146·5	190·75	102
8. ,, ,,	,, ,,	145·25	12·5	157·75	16·5	45·0	219·25	230
9. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	179·0	—	179·0	16·5	29·0	224·5	216
10. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	166·25	13·0	179·25	16·5	42·0	237·75	204
11. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	172·0	15·0	187·0	16·5	42·0	245·5	216
12. ,, Humber	,, Hull .	171·25	2·5	173·75	—	107·0	280·75	164
13. ,, ,,	,, ,,	144·0	34 25	178·25	—	124·75	303·0	148
14. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	154·5	49·75	204·25	—	108·75	313·0	221
15. Mersey & Severn .	Liverpool & Sharpness	25 5	66·5	92·0	19·75	48·0	159·75	84
16. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	56·75	69·25	126·0	28·5	35·0	189·5	162
17. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	30·5	81·5	112·0	19·75	35·0	166·75	132
18. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	25.5	96·5	122·0	19·75	48·0	189·75	132
19. ,, ,, *	,, ,,	44·0	82·25	126·25	28·5	48·0	202·75	150
20. ,, Humber	,, Hull .	74·75	30·5	105·25	12·0	32·0	149·25	152
21. ,, ,,	,, ,,	115·0	—	115·0	12·0	32·0	159·0	149
22. ,, ,,	,, ,,	161·25	—	161·25	—	26·0	187·25	104
23. Humber & Severn*	Hull & Sharpness .	35·5	49·75	85·25	16·5	137·75	239·5	127

VI. PARTICULARS OF SOME OF THE EXISTING WATERWAYS, AVAILABLE FOR INLAND NAVIGATION BETWEEN THE RIVERS THAMES, MERSEY, SEVERN, AND HUMBER.

*Note.—The routes starred thus * are vid Birmingham.*

the works; but without going into tedious detail, a rough approximation of cost can be obtained by multiplying the total mileage by some average cost per mile. The figures here used in two estimates doubtless err on the side of moderation, for not only will capital have to be expended in the various ways already indicated in this paragraph, but doubtless more will be required to reimburse the railway companies for the expenditure which they have incurred under various obligations acquired with the canals purchased, or entered into with the canal ment, paid £685,265 14*s.* 5*d.* to make up various annual shortages in this guaranteed dividend, ranging from an equivalent dividend of £0·015 per cent. in 1877, to £2·568 per cent. in 1901 and £1·517 per cent. in 1906. The total amounts paid under this head in the last three decennia are shown in Table IV. The Midland Railway Company has expended £119,529 on the maintenance of the Ashby and Cromford Canals between 1856 and 1905.

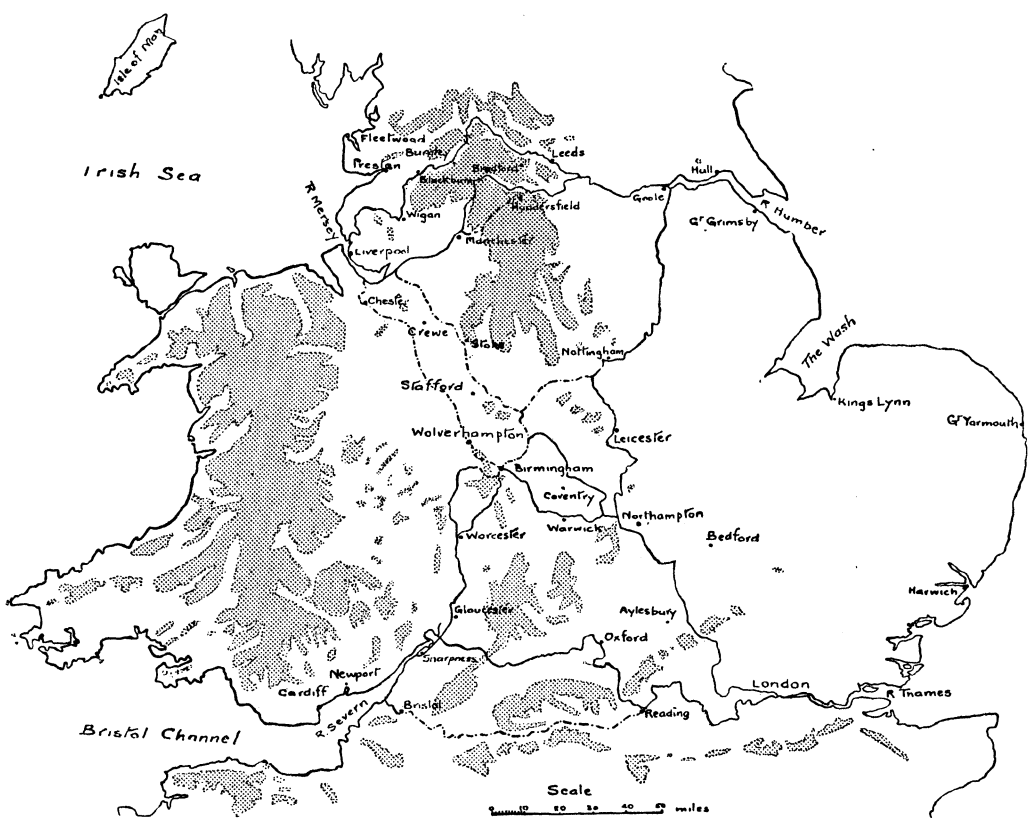
As the greater portion of the railway and canal mileage of the United Kingdom is laid

Constituent Waterways on the Interfluvial Canal Route.	Number of Controlling Authorities.	Length in Miles of the	
		Section forming the Through Route.	Canals of which the Section forms a part.
Independent canals	14	404·2	657·6
Railway owned or controlled canals . . .	7	213·9	510·0
Ship canals	2	28·5	52·2
Rivers or river navigations	6	311·5	—

VII. ANALYSIS OF A GRAND TRUNK CANAL SYSTEM COMBINING ROUTES NUMBERED 2, 7, 12, 15, 20 AND 23 IN TABLE VI.

down in England and Wales, and as, owing to the density of population, the amount of traffic, and the number of towns served by both systems of transport, the only really severe competition would, if at all, take place between the railway and canal systems of England and Wales, I have not, in Estimate 1, taken into consideration the canal systems of Scotland and Ireland.

If the State acquires the whole of the 3640·3 miles of canal in England and Wales for which returns are furnished, of which 2456·6 miles, or 67·5 per cent. of the total mileage, are owned by canal companies, 965·2 miles, or 26·5 per cent. of the total mileage, are owned by railway companies, and 218·5 miles, or 6·0 per cent. of the total mileage, are controlled by railway companies, the total expenditure on acquisition and reconstruction will be about £81,000,000,



INLAND WATERWAYS CONNECTING THE FOUR RIVERS THAMES, MERSEY, SEVERN, AND HUMBER.

NOTE.—Railway owned or controlled canals shown thus -·-·-

Independent canals ,, ,, ——

For clearness on so small a scale, canals in vicinity of those shown are omitted. Areas more than 500 feet above sea level are tinted.

Purchase of 1167·6 miles of canal	at £11,000 a mile	=	£12,844,000
Reconstruction of 618·1 miles of canal	„ £30,000 „	=	18,543,000
Improvement of 225 miles of river	„ £10,000 „	=	2,250,000
	Total		£33,637,000

ESTIMATE 2.

made up as in Estimate 1, to which must be added a further sum, to provide for the cost of maintenance and operation of the system, the provision of barges, etc.

Many of the more moderate advocates of canal resuscitation, recognising the small utility of some of the waterways and the great cost which would be incurred in acquiring all the barge canals, suggest that only certain canals should be purchased and reconstructed, so as to form a grand trunk system, connecting the four rivers, Thames, Mersey, Severn, and Humber; but the suggestion, although apparently offering an easy and economical solution of the problem of initiating a system of State-owned canals, does not really do so, for the State would have to make a selection of six routes from at least four times that number (see Table VI.), and doubtless as soon as the State declared its intention of purchasing, each district would immediately urge the claims of its own particular waterway. But even then, assuming the six routes have been selected, say, just for purposes of illustration, those numbered 2, 7, 12, 15, 20 and 23 in Table VI., no less than twenty-nine authorities, as shown in the analysis in Table VII., would have to be dealt with, in acquiring through routes over the 958 miles of waterway forming the interfluvial system; and if the owning authorities should insist on the sale

Heads of Returns.	Canals in 1905. In the United Kingdom. Independent Companies.	Owned by Railway Companies.	Controlled by Railway Companies.	Total. All Three Classes.	In England and Wales. Total. All Three Classes.	Railways in United Kingdom in 1908.
Authorised capital in millions of pounds	38·14	5·95	5·18	49·27	46·74	1,398 00
Paid up „ „ „	36·97	5·73	4·85	47·55	43·25	1,310 00
Revenue from tolls „ „	0·96	0·14	0·22	1·32	1·24	—
„ „ freight as carriers in millions of pounds	0·64	0·19	—	0·83	0·76	58·89
„ „ other sources „ „ „	0·44	0·07	0·02	0·53	0·50	61·00*
„ „ all „ „ „ „	2·04	0·40	0·24	2·68	2·50	119·89
Expenditure in millions of pounds	1·41	0·35	0·13	1·89	1·76	76·41†
Net profits „ „ „	0·63	0·04	0·12	0·79	0·74	43·48
Proportion of expenditure to receipts	0·69	0·89	0·53	0·70	0·70	0·64
Length of route in thousands of miles	3·31	1·14	0·22	4·67	3·64	23·23‡
Traffic in millions of tons §	28·94	5·83	8·38	43·16	41·18	491·60

* Includes receipts from passenger traffic . . . . . 51·70 million £
„ „ steamboats, canals, hotels, and miscellaneous sources 9·30 „

† Includes expenditure on locomotive power . . . . . 21·89 „
„ „ working of traffic . . . . . 21·64 „
„ „ maintenance of way, works, and stations . . 11·07 „
„ „ repair and renewal of carriages and wagons . . 6·21 „
„ „ rates and taxes . . . . . 4·88 „

‡ Nominal length of track, the length of running track is 39,316 miles, and
„ „ „ sidings „ „ 14,353 „

§ Canal traffic returns are probably more duplicated than those of railways, and thus the actual ratio of rail-borne freight to that borne by canals is greater than the apparent ratio.

VIII. THE LATEST PUBLISHED RETURNS OF CAPITAL, REVENUE, EXPENDITURE, AND TRAFFIC OF CANALS IN ENGLAND AND WALES, AND IN THE UNITED KINGDOM; AND OF RAILWAYS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

of the whole canal of which the section in the quadrifluvial route forms a part, then no less than 1167·6 miles of barge canal would have to be acquired. I have assumed that the ship canals would not be purchased, but that traders using the through route would pay toll over these sections to the ship canal companies. Of course, if these were also purchased, the estimate would have to be correspondingly increased: the purchase and reconstruction of this route would therefore entail an expenditure of £33,600,000, as shown in Estimate 2, or nearly half the cost of purchasing the whole system, and therefore would not be so economical as the advocates of this interfluvial canal scheme hope that it might be. When all this money has been expended, there is not the least certainty that the traffic on the renovated waterways will develop to a sufficient extent to justify the expenditure on their acquisition and reconstruction, or that the three or four thousand miles of canal in England and Wales and in the United Kingdom, respectively, will be able to offer any very severe competition to the sixteen or twenty-two thousand miles of railway, which latter only paid a little over 3 per cent. on their capital last year, and contributed £4,884,000 to the rates and taxes, as shown in Table VIII.



Photo by] [*Clarke & Hyde.*

ALONG TRING SUMMIT, THE HIGHEST POINT ON THE GRAND JUNCTION CANAL, THE BOATS ARE ON A LEVEL WITH THE DOME OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.



BRIDGE OVER THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL, NEAR UPPER NATELY.

Photo by M. Leon.

APPLIED MECHANICS.

By FRED M. WHITE.

THERE are possibly more interesting hobbies than "Ming" dynastics or Blue Mauritius postage stamps, and it seemed to Violet Acton that she had found such a thing, and that a comparatively inexpensive one. Like most popular favourites on the musical stage, she had a voluminous, not to say quaint correspondence, and for the most part she pasted her letters into an album, which sometime or another might perhaps find a use in history. She glanced thoughtfully over one of the letters which she had in her hand now. It was not the least rare of her possessions, though it was a comparatively recent treasure. It ran thus—

"HONOURED MISS,—

"As a regular first-nighter, and one who has frequently enjoyed your splendid performances, I humbly take the liberty of pointing out to you one or two little mistakes in your big scene in 'Claude Duval' at the Frivolity Theatre. In my opinion, the big burglary scene where you take the part of Claude Duval would be made more natural if you had a few hints from an old hand like myself. I don't mean an old hand on the stage, but an old hand at the other game. I am out of the profession now, for, you see, I have turned over a new leaf; but still, if you like to know what I mean, and care to drop me a line at any time, it would be a great pleasure to me to wait upon you and show you where I humbly think you have made a mistake. I hope you won't be annoyed with me, because I mean it well, and I don't care who the next man is, you haven't got a greater admirer than

"Your humble servant,

"PETER BUDD."

"The very thing," Violet mused. "Now, why didn't I think of that before? I am quite sure this man would help me. At any rate, I'll try it; and even if I fail, I shan't be in a more horrible mess than I am now. Now, I wonder if I can manage to get a night off to-morrow. I haven't been 'indisposed' for quite two years, and perhaps the manager would pass it for once."

Miss Acton sat down and wrote a little note to the address given by Mr. Peter Budd, asking him to call upon her the following evening at ten o'clock. She would be alone at her flat then, therefore it would be no difficult matter to send the servants out and receive the artistic burglar alone. It was just as well perhaps that nobody should know of his visit. As Miss Acton's flat was situated in a great block of other desirable tenements where a good many of her own friends resided, there was a fair amount of risk, but that she would have to run. For, sooth to say, she was sorely troubled in her mind, and unless desperate diseases were met with desperate remedies, matters looked like culminating in a most unpleasant crisis.

To put it plainly, Violet was engaged to be married. There was nothing strange about that, of course, neither was there anything strange in the truth that the marriage was an exceptionally brilliant one. For the Marquis of Richfort was no titled idiot under the glamour of the stage, but a young man of great wealth and attainments who at no distant date was tolerably certain to hold a high office in the Government. He was a rather serious-minded young man, but he had a very pretty notion of his own importance, and unless something out of the common occurred before very long, the popular favourite of the Frivolity Theatre would become the Marchioness of Richfort.

Not that anybody could say a word against Violet Acton. No shadow had rested for a moment upon her reputation since the time, four years ago, when she first appeared in the last row of the chorus. As to the rest, she was respectably enough connected; her father had been a well-known lawyer in Brighton, and on her mother's side she could boast of some exceedingly good Irish blood in her veins. So far as she could see, looking back, she had nothing to regret, with the exception of one foolish episode which had taken place some three years before. Violet Acton did not care to think about this now, but since her

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engagement to Richfort it had been forced upon her attention in a more or less unpleasant manner. She would have given a good deal to recall those few foolish letters which she had written to a man who was now dead and gone, and who had at one time promised to make a great reputation as a poet and writer of imaginative romance. It had been the nearest approach to a love idyll in which Violet had engaged, and it had been a matter of sincere grief to her when the young man died, and the actress had quite forgotten that those harmlessly sentimental letters were still in existence. They had come back to her with other effects of the poet, and she had forgotten to destroy them. Perhaps she had kept them for sentimental reasons.

But be that as it might, they had recently found their way into the possession of a nebulous individual who threatened to make himself exceedingly unpleasant. In ordinary circumstances Violet would have laughed, and if she had been engaged to an ordinary young man, she would have probably told him all about it. But, being a woman, she did none of these things.

It was just the set of chances in which the blackmailer sees his opportunity. There is a popular delusion to the effect that the blackmailing reptile exists only amongst foreign waiters and the class which make a precarious livelihood by bleeding City men. This is a mistaken estimate, for the blackmailer is occasionally met in Society, and before now has been known to belong to a good club. And Violet was not quite sure as to whether or not Algernon Atherley belonged to this category.

At any rate, he was a well-dressed, well-set-up man, and he himself had a flat in Maxbridge Mansions also. He was on fairly good terms with most of the people of Violet's set, and there were only a few people who fought shy of him. Even those would have been hard put to it to say why, and Violet had been rather inclined to like him. They had seen a good deal of one another; he occasionally dropped into Miss Acton's flat to tea, and she had always found him an amusing and entertaining companion.

But since her engagement to Richfort, matters had not gone so smoothly. It was about this time that the hand of the blackmailer began to show ominously. He himself remained, so to speak, the flower which blushes unseen, and he had chosen, in the first instance, to approach Miss Acton through the medium of Atherley.

Atherley was properly indignant, of course; he would like to seek out the fellow and give him the thrashing he deserved. But the blackmailer was cunning to a degree; he refused to come out in the open, though as time went on he became more threatening, so that he was getting on Violet's nerves. There was only one thing for it now—she must either tell Richfort everything, or she must pay the £500 which the sinister figure in the background demanded as the price of the letters. It was an odd enough situation in its way, though it presented novel features. And now the time for action had arrived.

Now, Violet Acton might be frivolous, as she undoubtedly was, but she was a long way from being a fool, and she had a more than intelligent grasp on the situation. She had courage, too, and the strongest disinclination to part with the money, for many reasons. One of the chief and most powerful was that she hadn't got it. And, again, she hated to be done in this fashion. For a long time she pondered the matter over in her mind, and then at last she began to see exactly how it was that those letters had found their way from an old, forgotten desk into the possession of the blackmailer who stood behind Atherley. And she began now to see her way, too, to recovering possession of the letters, and the whole inspiration had come to her in a flash as she stood pasting Peter Budd's criticisms into her book.

She posted the letter to the converted burglar herself, after which she rang the bell for tea. There was nobody coming but Mr. Atherley, she informed the maid, and she didn't wish to see anybody else. He came along presently, smiling and debonair, and Violet noticed that he was wearing a new morning-coat for the occasion. Regarding him coolly and critically, she was bound to admit that he did not look in the least like a scoundrel. His air was easy and well-bred, and there was quite a frank smile in his eyes. Just for a moment Violet's heart smote her; perhaps he was acting in her best and truest interest—and this is a cold and crafty world, and one can never quite tell. And there was no doubt of the fact either that Atherley and the stricken poet, who was the original cause of the trouble, had been at school together. This was possibly why the blackmailer had approached Atherley in the first instance. Still, Miss Acton had learnt a good deal of the world since her poet's untimely death, and she could see that it would be necessary to walk



"Atherley appeared to be taken considerably aback at the question."

circumspectly. Atherley alluded to the matter now as he sat there in the charming little drawing-room drinking his tea.

Necessarily, Miss Acton professed herself to be vastly obliged to Mr. Atherley. There was a grateful light in her beautiful blue eyes as she spoke to him. She murmured something to the effect that it is a blessed thing in the hour of tribulation to possess a real friend. Perhaps she was doing wrong in not laying the whole trouble frankly and openly before Lord Richfort, but she hesitated to do that until she was compelled to do so. Atherley shook his head. He seemed to doubt the wisdom and the strict honour of this course, but he said nothing. That was a matter upon which Miss Acton must be guided by her own feelings. But, one way or another, she must make up her mind, as there was no time to lose. Atherley appeared to wash his hands of it.

"I positively don't know what to do," Violet murmured. "Anyhow, it's awfully good of you to come to me like this. And I really don't know how to thank you. I can't understand why it is that everybody is so ready to help me."

Atherley murmured something complimentary as he stirred his tea. He conveyed his admiration gallantly.

"Of course, anyone would," he said. "And just now, one is all the more anxious to assist you. You must see for yourself that the ruffian who has these letters is deliberately taking advantage of your engagement to Richfort. You see, if Richfort was the ordinary Johnny who hangs about stage-doors and supper-rooms, the letters would be quite easy. But Richfort is a serious young man with lofty ideals, and if he knew of those letters, he might be surprised to hear that you had been previously engaged to be married, and to such a Bohemian as our poor friend. Of course, I don't say that he would, but he might."

Violet Acton sighed deeply.

"It's more than possible, simply because I have omitted to mention the fact hitherto," she said. "I only wish I had still got the wretched things, and I would take them straight to my future husband myself."

"But you wouldn't like him to receive them without a sufficient explanation," said Atherley.

"Of course not," she replied. "But really, Mr. Atherley, do you see any harm in the mere schoolgirl sentiment of those letters?"

"Well, I don't," Atherley said. "But then——"

"Oh, then, you've seen them?" Violet asked innocently.

Atherley appeared to be taken considerably aback at the question. For an easy, assured man of the world he looked quite confused.

"Well, yes," he stammered. "It—it was like this. I didn't want to worry you, or I should have told you before. You see, the rascal sent me one of the letters, much in the same way as a bandit has a playful habit of sending along an ear of a captive to his friends with a view to hurrying up the ransom. I didn't want you to feel that I had seen one of the letters, and that's why I never told you about it."

Violet smiled as if she found the simile amusing. As a matter of fact, she hardly noticed it. She had stumbled, not altogether by accident, upon something which she had suspected for some time.

"I see," she said thoughtfully. "I understand. And you think if we don't buy these letters soon, they will be sent to Lord Richfort?"

"I should say that there isn't the slightest doubt of it," Atherley said. "What I am afraid of is that the fellow might ask more."

"But I haven't got it!" Violet cried. "Of course, I am making a good income and all that, and I don't think I am unduly extravagant, but, all the same, I never seem to have any money. What a hateful business it is altogether! My dear friend, I don't know how I can possibly get this money. Now, don't you think we could find some way of tricking the fellow out of the letters? Really, it would be quite fair. I suppose he keeps them in some very secure place."

"In a safe, I expect," Atherley said. "Ah, you may be sure that he is running no risks. I shouldn't indulge in any romantic dreams of that sort, if I were you. And, besides, you couldn't open a safe. You couldn't do it even if I were there to help you. We must try some other plan."

"But couldn't we burgle his safe, really?"

Atherley shook his head. He could not refrain from smiling. The idea of Violet acting the part of amateur burglar strongly appealed to his sense of humour. Still, although he could see the comic side of it, there was something in this flight of fancy which caused him an uncomfortable feeling that his fair companion was laughing at him.

"Don't you think you had better stick to business?" he said. "This is not stage comedy, you know."

"I thought I was serious," Violet protested. "I thought I was making a practical suggestion. And besides, after all's said and done, there's no great hurry."

"Oh, I am afraid there is," Atherley returned.

"But then I've got to find the money, and that will take some time. You must put your friend off for a week or two."

"My friend?" Atherley said coldly. "I don't quite follow."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, I'm sure. I mean your acquaintance. Let us dissemble, as they say on the stage. Try and put this man off, and see if we can devise some plan of campaign. Of course, you may say that it is a romantic idea on my part, but I should dearly love to steal those letters, if I had a chance. Still, if nothing can be done, I suppose I shall have to buy them back. Let me see. Suppose you come back to me on Tuesday. I am going to Brighton on Sunday evening to Monday afternoon, and between now and then I am going to devote my whole time to devising a way to get possession of those letters. I do hope that the man who has them lives in a flat—you see, it will make my task so much more easy."

Atherley did not like the mocking light in his companion's eyes at all. She was distinctly laughing at him now, and she was not making the slightest effort to conceal it. It seemed strange to him that a woman in so serious a position should take the thing so easily. He rose from his chair and reached for his hat. He made some sort of attempt to shake hands, but Miss Acton did not appear to notice.

"Well, good-bye," he said. "I will come again on Tuesday. Only please don't delay the thing any longer. Believe me, I am speaking in your best interests."

"You are too kind," Violet said demurely. "Try to bring the letters with you. I hope they are appropriately tied up with blue ribbon and sealed with violet wax."

"Violet wax?" Atherley stammered. "Blue ribbon? Why—but, of course, you are joking. I see what you mean. They would be fastened up like that if it was in a play; but, really, you must be serious. You must try to realise your position. And now, really, I shall have to go. But I won't forget you—I won't fail you on Tuesday. Good-bye."

Atherley left the flat somehow or other without shaking hands with his hostess. Afterwards he wondered why this ceremony had been overlooked. Meanwhile, the actress was sitting there grave and thoughtful enough now.

"I think it's all right," she murmured. "If my burglar is a good man, it ought to be a certainty."

II.

VIOLET was quite alone in her flat. She was always by way of being a considerate mistress, and, seeing that she was not going out herself this evening, she had allowed her domestic staff a few hours' liberty; indeed, she had gone further than that, and had actually secured them tickets for the Frivolity Theatre. She was not playing herself this evening, for she had sent a message round to the theatre, accompanied by a doctor's certificate to the effect that she was suffering from a slight nervous strain. After two hundred consecutive nights in the same part, the excuse sounded plausible enough, and the management was satisfied. So, incidentally, was Violet Acton's understudy. And therefore it was with an easy conscience that the popular actress sat there awaiting the advent of Mr. Peter Budd. Her head was feeling slightly better now, especially as she had taken a little walk and subsequently stopped in the vestibule a few moments to chat with the hall-porter.

Mr. Budd came punctually at the appointed moment and knocked timidly at the door of the flat. He came shambling in, uncomfortable and hot, not to say sticky, and presently found himself seated opposite the brilliant actress in her dining-room smoking a cigarette and trying vainly to feel at ease. He was a comparatively young man, fairly well spoken, and dressed after the manner of a respectable City clerk whose ideas run in the direction of flashiness, and who is occasionally fond of backing his fancy. At an early stage of the proceedings he intimated that though he was now known as Peter Budd, that was not the name under which he had come in contact with the superior forces of the law.

"It is exceedingly interesting," Violet murmured. "And really, I don't know how to thank you sufficiently for your kindness in coming here this evening. You don't know how I appreciate it."

"It was blooming cheek," Budd said with conviction. "That's what it was, nothing more or less than blooming cheek. Not as I realised it till after I had posted the letter."

"Not at all," Violet murmured sweetly, "not at all. It was really most thoughtful of you. Without really knowing it, Mr. Budd, you have in you the making of an artist. Under happier conditions I am sure you would have made a name for yourself. For you came to the Frivolity Theatre, and as an artist you were pained to see that I was doing my work so crudely. It was exceedingly nice of you to go out of your way to guide the footsteps of a stranger into the right path."

"No thanks are needed," Budd muttered politely. "But you always looked so good-tempered and amiable——"

"Quite so," Violet murmured. "At any rate, I am glad you have come here, and I am glad that we understand one another. And this artistic sympathy is a bond between us. Perhaps you guessed, or perhaps you read somewhere, that I am always grateful for hints, especially in the way of my profession. And I always pride myself in getting my details as realistic as possible, and that is one, but only one of the reasons, why I wrote to you. I want you to show me exactly what you mean. Of course, I don't suggest that we should start on a burgling expedition."

"I really couldn't do that, miss," Budd said quite firmly. "You see, I have had my lesson, and I'm going to profit by it. I am doing very well now, and, besides, I hope to get married before long. But if you happen to have a safe here, I could show you exactly what I mean."

"I'm sorry I don't possess one," Violet said regretfully. "But if I had, do you really think you could open it?"

Budd's smile was distinctly professional.

"Well, I should hope so, miss," he said. 'I never saw one that beat me yet. Ever since I was a boy, I had an instinct that way. Besides, you see, it was the trade I was brought up to. I'm not boasting when I say that there isn't a safe in the City of London which I couldn't manage in two hours. Still, I dare say I could show you what I mean if you had such a thing as a tin box about the place. But, even then, it

wouldn't be a practical lesson. It would pass on the stage, of course."

"That would be very nice," Violet smiled sweetly. "I will see what I can manage presently. I have a little scheme of my own which you may be disposed to fall in with, and I do hope, Mr. Budd, that you brought your tools with you."

Budd tapped his coat pocket significantly.

"Yes, I did that," he explained. "It was a bit risky, of course, but I really hadn't the heart to refuse you. As a matter of fact, I borrowed these. They're not quite all an artist would desire, but they are not bad."

The speaker produced several implements of his late trade and laid them on the table. He proceeded glibly to explain their uses. When at length the category was finished, Budd once more suggested the necessity of a tin box, with the object of completing the lesson. Violet shook her head regretfully.

"I haven't such a thing on the premises," she said, "but I think I have a better idea than that. It would be an excellent joke in its way if you would only help me. You see, I have a friend who lives in a flat close by, and I told—I told her all about your letter. Of course, I didn't show it to her, but she was fearfully interested and all that kind of thing, but she was quite sure that even if you came here, you would be able to teach me nothing, and I told her that I should get into her flat one day and burgle her safe. In the end, we had a bet on it; and the conditions were that if within a week I managed to steal a bundle of letters out of her safe, she was to pay me the full amount of the bet. Now, those letters are tied up with blue ribbon and sealed with violet wax. I tell you this because I want you to feel that everything is quite straightforward——"

"It would be, with you, miss," Budd muttered.

"Now, that's very nice of you, Mr. Budd. And I have managed to get hold of the key of my friend's flat, and I know she won't be home for hours yet, and she has a deaf old housekeeper whom it is impossible to rouse. Now, if you will come along with me, we shall be able to have a real lesson with a real safe. And when the joke comes to be explained, nobody will laugh more heartily than my friend herself. Come along."

Budd demurred. He looked, if possible, a little more hot and uncomfortable than before. But now, he was as clay in the hands of the potter. There was never yet man born of woman who could refuse Violet Acton anything when once she had made up her mind to it. It was just half an hour later that master and pupil returned to the dining-room of Miss Acton's flat, and those precious moments had been by no means wasted. And, surely enough, a little packet of letters tied up with blue ribbon and sealed with violet wax lay by the side of a tumbler out of which Peter Budd was regaling himself with something exceedingly neat and exclusive in the way of a branded champagne. He was still very shy, and not a little uncomfortable, but he had lost his nervousness now, and his eyes wore a placid look of professional satisfaction.

"I suppose it's all right, miss," he said. "At any rate, you know what to do now; and now, if there is nothing more I can do for you, I think I'll be off."

* * * * *

Strangely enough, Atherley failed to keep his appointment on Tuesday afternoon. This was all the more odd seeing that he had been having anything but a good time lately. More than one of his little schemes had gone astray, and his creditors were beginning to press him. There is a freemasonry amongst the tradesmen of a certain class, and their intimate knowledge of the inner life of some of their customers would amaze them. For instance, most of them knew exactly how far to let Atherley go, and he was painfully aware that he had reached the end. A pretty little scheme of his in which figured a certain flighty countess and some family diamonds had miscarried at the last moment, and Atherley was face to face with the fact that unless he could provide himself with a few hundred pounds at the end of the week, he was likely to find himself in serious trouble. Therefore it was all the more strange that he should fail to keep his appointment, seeing that he might have used the cheque intended for the unknown blackmailer — temporarily, of course, until he could see his way out of his present difficulties. But, at any rate, he did fail to keep his promise, and Violet smiled to herself as the clock moved steadily on and there was no sign of Algernon Atherley. In a measure she was disappointed, because the climax of the little scheme would be missing. She had hoped to make quite a dramatic affair of it; she had hoped to confront Atherley with the letters and enjoy his discomfiture.

At any rate, there were no signs of



"He proceeded glibly to explain their uses."

Atherley. Perhaps he had forgotten his promise. It was about seven o'clock the same evening, when he was coming home, that he met Miss Acton going down the stairs. She smiled at him in her most fascinating fashion, but she did not offer her hand, neither did Atherley seem to expect it. He looked strangely uncomfortable and ill at ease, and would have passed on if she had not stopped him.

"So you didn't come this afternoon," she said. "Oh, there is no need to apologise. I didn't wait in for you. There was no absolute necessity to do so. I wanted to know if my little plan was quite successful, because, after all, I managed to get those letters from that scoundrel. Probably he told you. I've sent the letters on to Lord Richfort, explaining the circumstances under which they were written. I don't think they will trouble him any more than they do me! I regret only one thing, and that is that I am a woman. This prevents me from giving that rascal the horsewhipping he deserves. I can't stop a moment—I shall be late for the theatre, as it is."

IN THE VALLEY OF LUCHON.

DAY long, and night long,
From the soaring peaks and the snow,
Down through the valley villages
The cold white waters flow.

Quiet are the villages,
And very quiet the cloud
At rest on the breast of the mountain;
But the falling waves are loud.

Through the little, clustering cottages,
Through the little, climbing fields,
Where every sunburnt vineyard
Its patch of purple yields.

High hung, a steel-bright scimitar,
The crooked glacier gleams.
The white church dreams in the valley
Where the red oleander dreams.

And every wonder of beauty
Comes, as a dream comes true,
Where the sun drips rose from the ledges
And the moon by the peak swims blue.

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.



PRECAUTION.

"Didn't you propose to her sooner than you expected?"
"Yes; but, you see, I didn't want to exhaust all my topics of conversation before we were married."

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

Bobbie: That Mrs. Smith said something nice about you.

Mrs. Brown (purring): What was it, Bobbie?

Bobbie: She said you didn't show your age.

ACROSS THE AGES.

You may read in books (if your mind's that way)
About animals strange of a former day—
Creatures with names as long as your arm
And a disposition to do man harm!

These dreadful beasts of a bygone time
(Whose names, alas! wouldn't fit my rhyme)
Were dangerous foes when short of grub
And primitive man was glad of his *club!*

Well! times have altered—there is no doubt—
And somehow these beasts have all died out:
Though, of course, a few troubles, now and then
As in days of yore still happen to men.

And whenever he feels the woes of life—
A rainy day, or a scolding wife—
You'll observe that a man to his *club* will fly
As his ancestor did in days gone by!

R. Mertun.

New Vicar: Might I inquire why you think I operate an airship?

Small Boy: Why, when you was walking along this mornin', the boss says to the missus, "Here comes the new sky-pilot."

The Mother: My little boy was rude, I know. I am afraid he is awfully spoiled.

The Stranger: Don't mention it, madam! It is better that he should be spoiled than that his young life be embittered by the thought that he is different from all other modern children.

Jones: You saved me from being killed by that motor. I owe my life to you; how shall I ever repay you?

Brown: Young man, don't you let trifling debts like that worry you!

A. N. D.

It was only her second morning at school, and her mother was walking with her to the schoolhouse, both feeling rather anxious and a little important. Over-night she had proudly announced that she had some home-lessons to do, and it appeared that her teacher had told her that next morning she should ask her how to spell "AND." Her mother had helped her, and together they had studied the subject in all its lights, and when she went to bed it seemed as if the thing was mastered; but with the light of day and the exciting prospect of lessons it became more elusive, and as she trotted to school, with her hand in her mother's, several rehearsals took place.

"Tell me again, mother—I keep forgetting," she said, as they turned the last corner, raising her anxious, pretty eyes to her mother's—equally anxious and equally pretty.

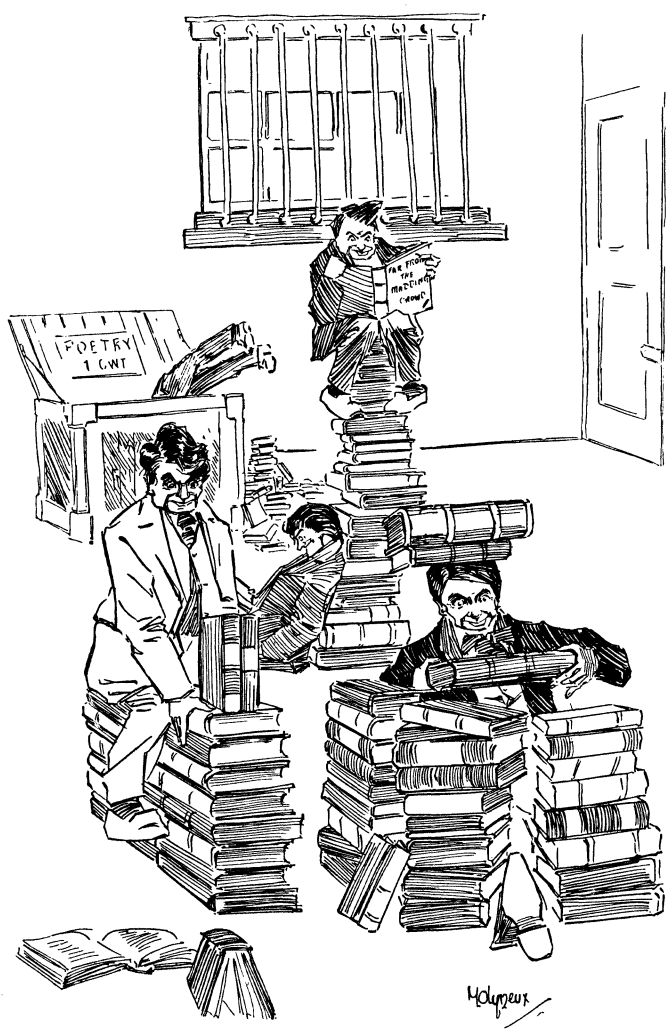
"A-N-D," said her mother with passionate impressiveness. "Look here, my bird, *how* can I make you remember? Listen. A—that's what the gardener says, you know, when he can't hear; N—that's the little red hen in the story, and we'll call it 'en just for once; D"—she paused a moment, at a loss, then exclaimed: "D—why, Fiddle-de-*dee*—that D, of course!"

"Oh, yes, mother; I shall remember now," said the youthful student, and that moment they turned into the school gate. Her mother went in with her and stayed, lingeringly, to take off her little coat and bonnet, and change her boots for her strap slippers.

"Say it again, mother—quick, *quick!*" whispered the child. But just then the under-teacher came in at the door to take her into her classroom, and her mother whispered "A-N-D" into her yellow curls.

At twelve o'clock she went to fetch her home, and noticed, with a pang, an ominous chilled look about her small daughter's face. She feared the worst, but no word was spoken till they were in the road and home was in sight. Then she said tenderly: "Did you forget how to spell it, darling?"

"No, mamma," replied the child, with a trembling lip, "but she never asked me."



THE SLEEP CURE.

"Several hundredweights of books have been sent by the Slocum Library authorities to the City Asylum. It is found that they keep the patients quiet."—*Extract from a local paper.*

Customer (in book-shop): Have you Dante's "Inferno?"

Clerk: No, but I can give you "Who's Who in London."

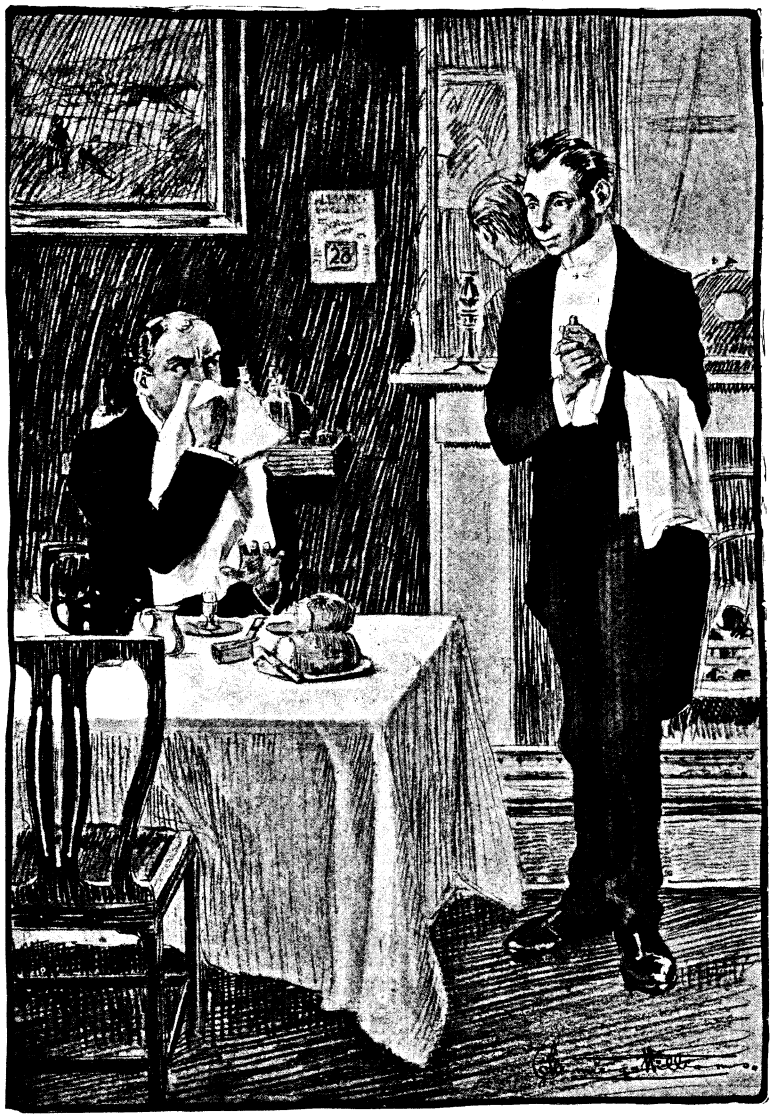
"My brother," said the man with the condensed moustache, "is a remarkable genius. He can play ten games of chess at the same time, blindfolded, keeping in mind constantly the positions of all the men on all the boards."

"That's fair," replied the man with the irregular beard. "Only fair. I consider my wife a real genius. She can remember from one month to another the exact situations of the characters in the s rial stories in all the magazines."



ESCORT ASSUMED.

SHORT-SIGHTED 'BUS CONDUCTOR (to whom the immaculate one has tendered two pennies): Two penny ones, sir?



TO RELIEVE THE SITUATION.

"GREAT Scott, waiter, this egg's awful!"
"Sorry, sir, shall I light a cigarette?"

A YOUNG enthusiastic revivalist had been exhorting a congregation in a small Western town for over two hours without perceptible effect. He was somewhat discouraged until a rough old miner interrupted him with—

"Say, brother, I'd like to ask a question."

The young revivalist beamed. "Thank you, my man, for your interest," he replied. "I shall be more than glad to set you right on any question. Your desire for enlightenment is a good sign, which I am very, very glad to see. Now, what is it you want to know?"

"Can I smoke?" asked the miner.

VICAR: Young man, I'm surprised to see you fishing on the Sabbath. I shall certainly make it the subject of a sermon.

YOUTHFUL PARISHIONER: Waal, if it gives you an idea for a sermon, maybe it's worth it!

WIFE: I've invited one of my old admirers to dinner. Do you mind?

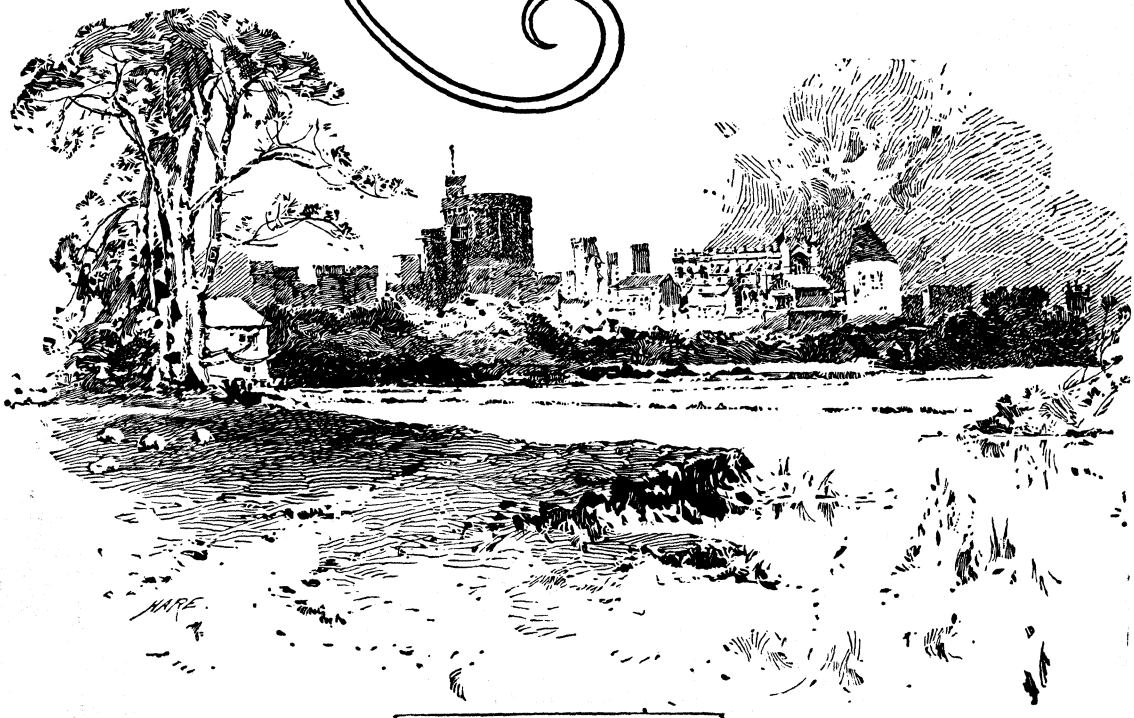
HUSBAND: Mind? Heavens, no! I always love to associate with lucky people.

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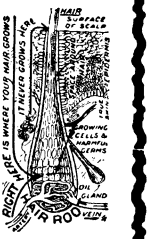


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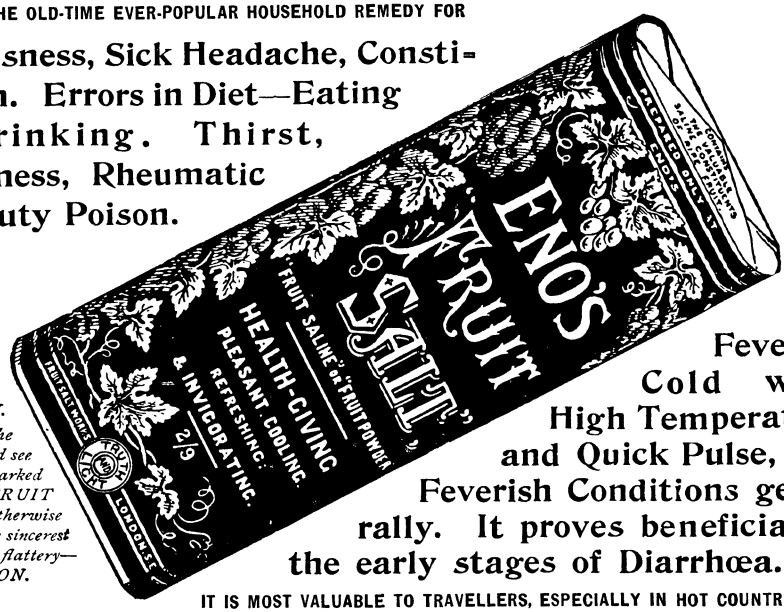
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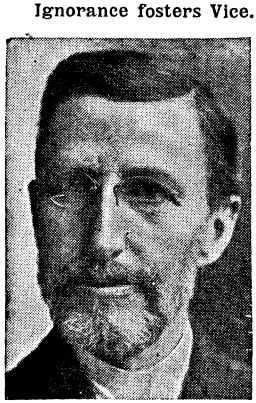
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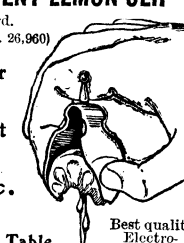
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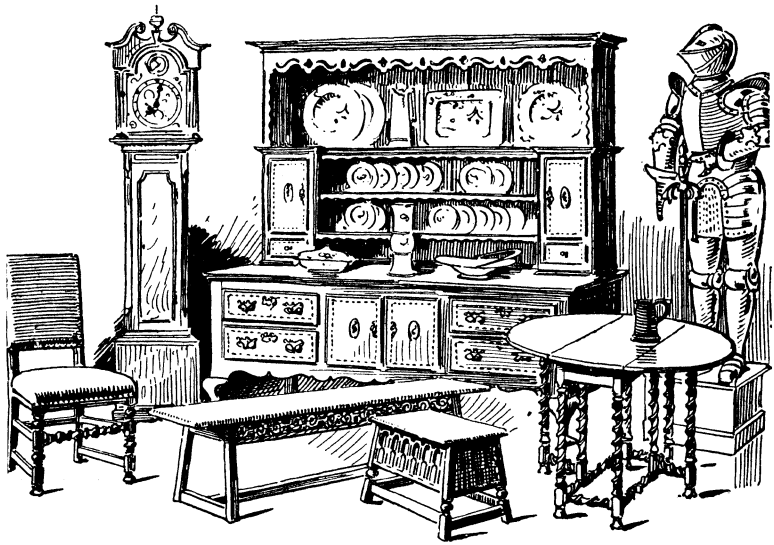


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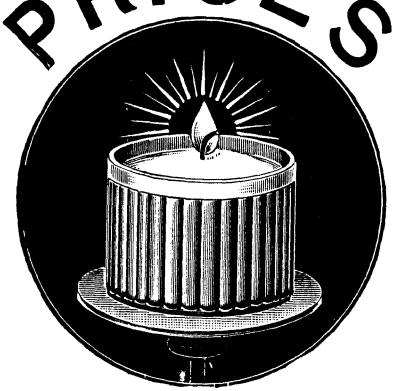
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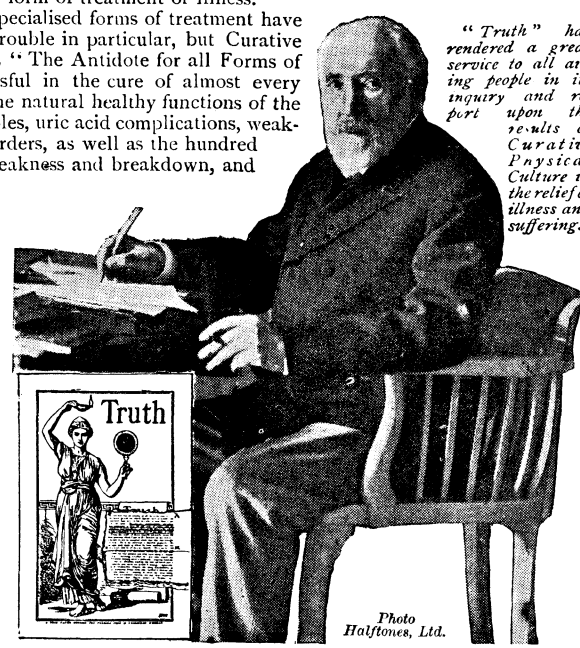


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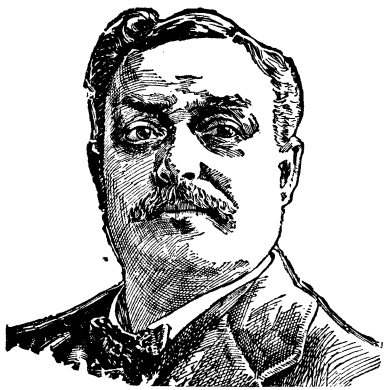
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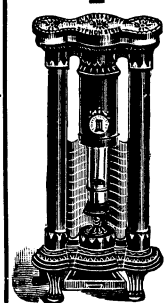
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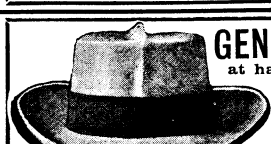
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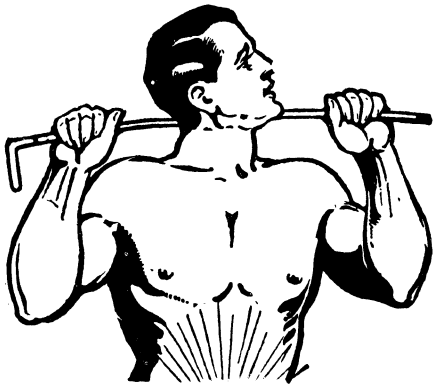
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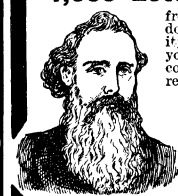
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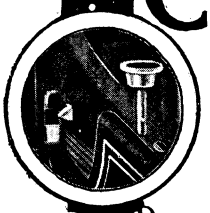
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How Women Manage To Look Young.

Well-known society woman tells how, after cold creams, face masks, massage, and beauty specialists had failed, she

TOOK WRINKLES OUT IN ONE NIGHT.

FREE.

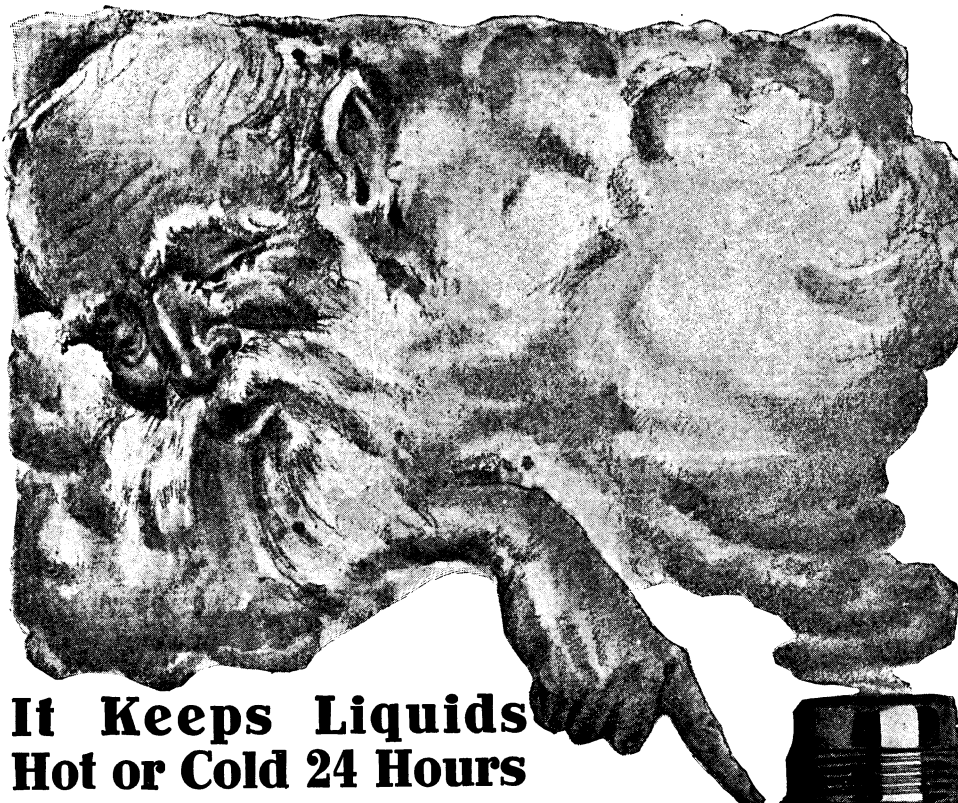


The remarkable experience of a well-known London society woman is still the subject of a wonder and curiosity among her acquaintances and those who have noticed the marvellous change in her appearance. Replying to an inquiry she said:—"Owing to the worries and late hours incident to the London season I had begun to lose my beautiful complexion, and noticeable lines and wrinkles were forming about my eyes and on my forehead. At first I was only annoyed, but as I noticed my lines and wrinkles growing deeper day by day, and found that creams, steaming pots, masks, massage, and even beauty specialists gave me no relief, I became positively alarmed. The season was not half over, and although feeling as well as ever, I looked fully ten years older than at the beginning. At last, when about to give up in despair, I heard of a simple home treatment which was highly recommended by Countess Radsch, of London, who had used it personally with remarkable results. I also learnt that the Countess de Kergommeaux, of Paris, advised its use in a special article published in a leading London journal. After making further inquiries, and finding that the Baroness de Villers praised it in a most unqualified manner, I decided to give it a trial, and you can judge of my surprise when on the first morning I awoke to find that most of

MY WRINKLES WERE GONE IN ONE NIGHT,

and at the end of three nights my face, as you can see, was as clear, rosy, and smooth as a child's, and remains so to this day. Can you wonder that I now recommend this wonderful treatment to all, either young or old, who through trouble, worry, illness, or from any other cause, have lost their youthful beauty and carry those hideous lines and wrinkles which are the dread of womankind? It took ten years from my face in a night, and I believe it will do as much for you."

Through the kindness of this lady it has been possible to arrange to have Free particulars concerning this simple home treatment, which can be used without the knowledge of even your nearest friend, sent to all who are interested. Simply send your name and address to Madame Harriett Meta, Dept. 52 B. 61, New Oxford Street, London, W.C., and ask for the free information offered to THE WINDSOR readers.



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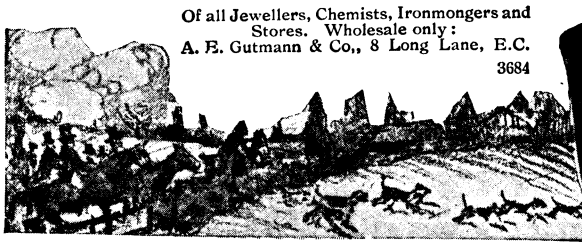
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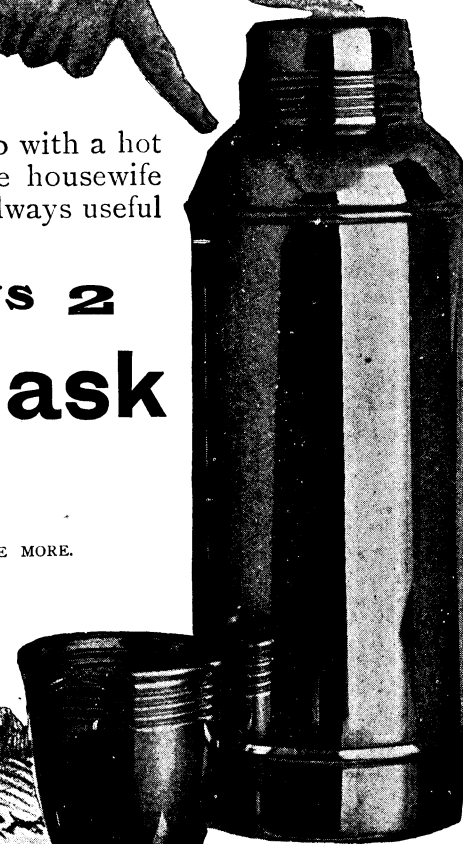
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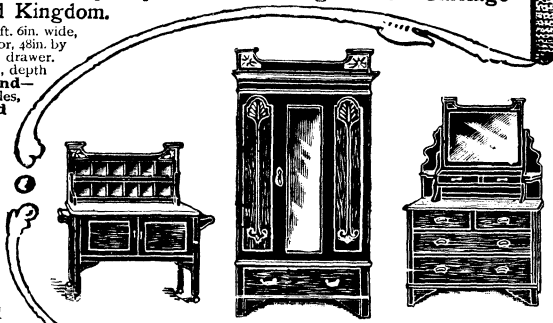
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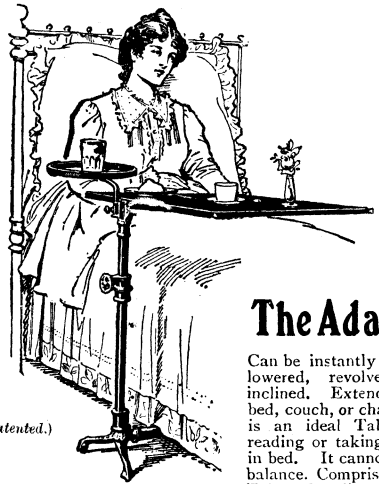
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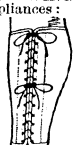
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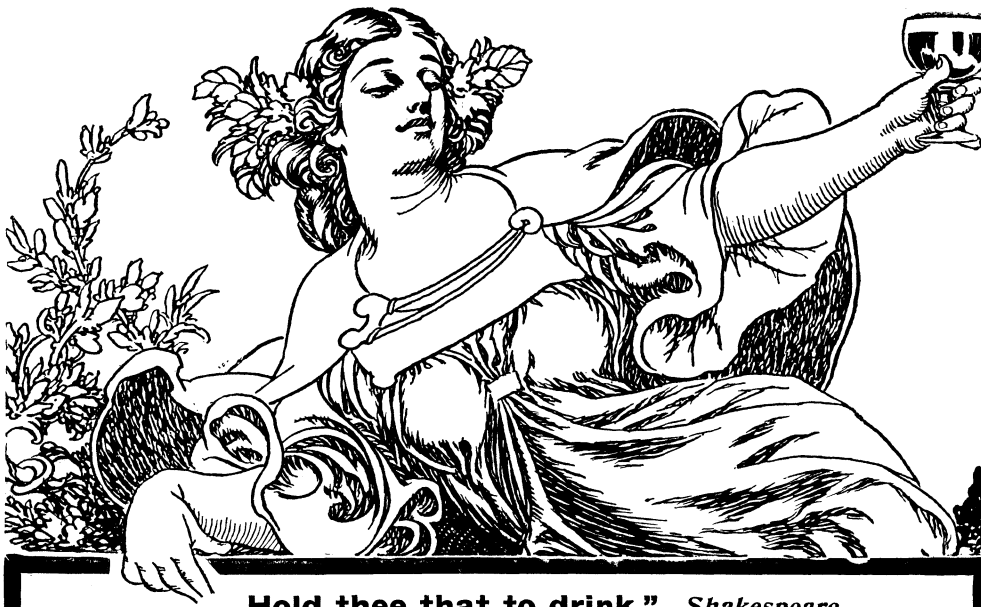
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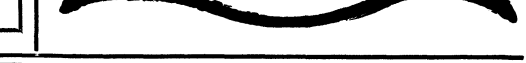
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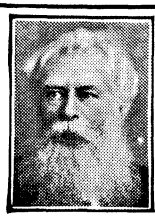
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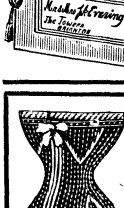


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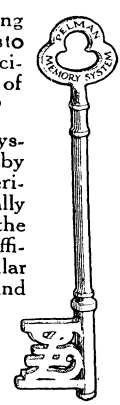
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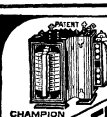
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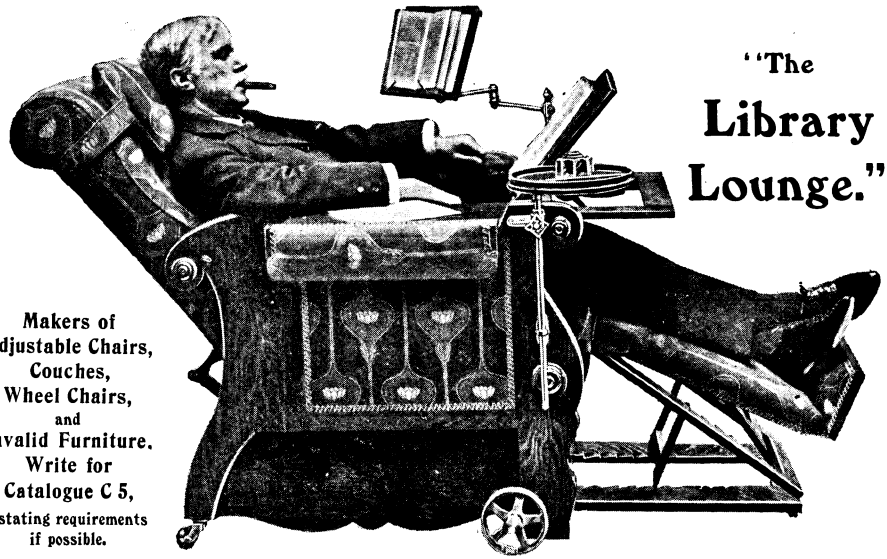
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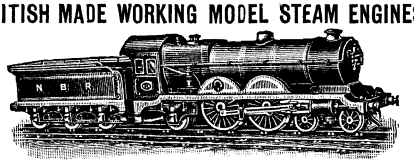
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TO enumerate *all* of the symptoms of present-day nerve-failure or degeneration of tone in the nervous system would occupy columns of newspaper space. Dr. Rudolf L. Muller, a famous Continental authority on nervous diseases (who is now offering a free trial of his remarkably successful "New Life" food to readers of THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE), enumerates in his book, "The Way to Health," some fifty of the most important. Among these are :

—Tender Scalp.
—Feeling of Pressure in the Head.
—Specks before the Eyes.
—Noises in the Ears.
—Dizziness.
—Various Morbid Fears.
—Sweating without cause.
—Heaviness of Limbs
—Feeble or Frequent Pulse.
—Craving for Drugs.
—Inability to Concentrate the Mind.
—Excessive and Unreasonable Timidity.
—Extreme Sensibility.
—Sleeplessness.
—Loss of Mental Control.
—Fearful Dreams.
—Drowsiness.
—Noises in Ears and Head.
—Dislike for Mental or Physical Effort.
—Pains at Small of Back or in Body.
—Dilated Pupils of the Eyes.
—Melancholia and Uncertainty.
—Shivering and Numbness.
—Temporary Paralysis.
—Failure of Memory.
—Fear of Insanity.

Any one or more of these is an unmistakable indication of some weakness in the delicate fabric of the nerves, the brain, and the spinal column, and which if neglected or treated with indifference may ultimately culminate in total mental and nervous collapse. This is so lucidly and so tellingly described in Dr. Muller's new book as to make the latter most helpful to everyone, especially to those who note some sign of weakening nerves. The latter, indeed, should at once make application for a copy of Dr. Muller's book, especially as it is, for the time being, offered free of cost. This book, by the way, was originally published at one shilling, and has already commanded a very large sale in this country.

It is rarely, indeed, that the whole subject of mental and nervous disorders has been treated in a manner at once so scientifically accurate, and yet in so plain-spoken a way. Shorn of every vestige of technicality or mystifying phraseology, the book reads as interestingly as any romance, while crammed from cover to cover with a mass of practical information and useful advice to the nervous and nerve-stricken who form so numerous a quantity of the population in the nerve-exhausting times in which we now live and move and have our being.

Source of all Disease.

The writer argues—and argues in a most convincing way, evidencing his own overwhelming conviction—that ALL disease has its origin in starved nerve and brain cells. When, for instance, the writer tells us that there are about 1,600 millions of these nerve-cells in the grey matter of the brain, the reader gathers some idea of how much his or her brain-power depends upon the healthy conditions and ordered working of this mighty army of the mind.

When, again, it is remembered that the brain, by means of nerve-fibres, controls every muscular action and every vital function, we realise that the nerves are really the life itself. The striking illustrations are by no means the least interesting feature of the book. The drawings of the healthy and unhealthy nerves help one to realise the difference between nerves strong and weak.

Apart altogether from the free trial supply of Dr. Muller's "New Life" food, which is now offered for the first time to the British public, the book alone is well worth writing for, as the following somewhat slight summary will show :—

The first chapter deals with "The Strain of Modern Life," and the author draws a striking picture between the leisured existence of our forefathers and the hustling no-time-to-wait life of the 20th century. He deals plainly with many of the causes of nervous breakdown, and further explains a true method of strengthening a nervous system that is weak or weakening. Chapter two is devoted to a description of the brain cells and the best method of feeding and developing them. It indicates, too, the signs of nervous disease and failing powers, and shows how a lowered nervous vitality invites a host of diseases, both mental and physical. In the third chapter the author treats fully of the nature of the nerves and the brain, and shows how it is always the brightest and cleverest who suffer most from nervous ailments, a fact which, unfortunately, the daily reports in the newspapers fully bear out. This chapter is illustrated by very striking illustrations showing how the central nervous system communicates with every part of the body, and originates and controls every movement.

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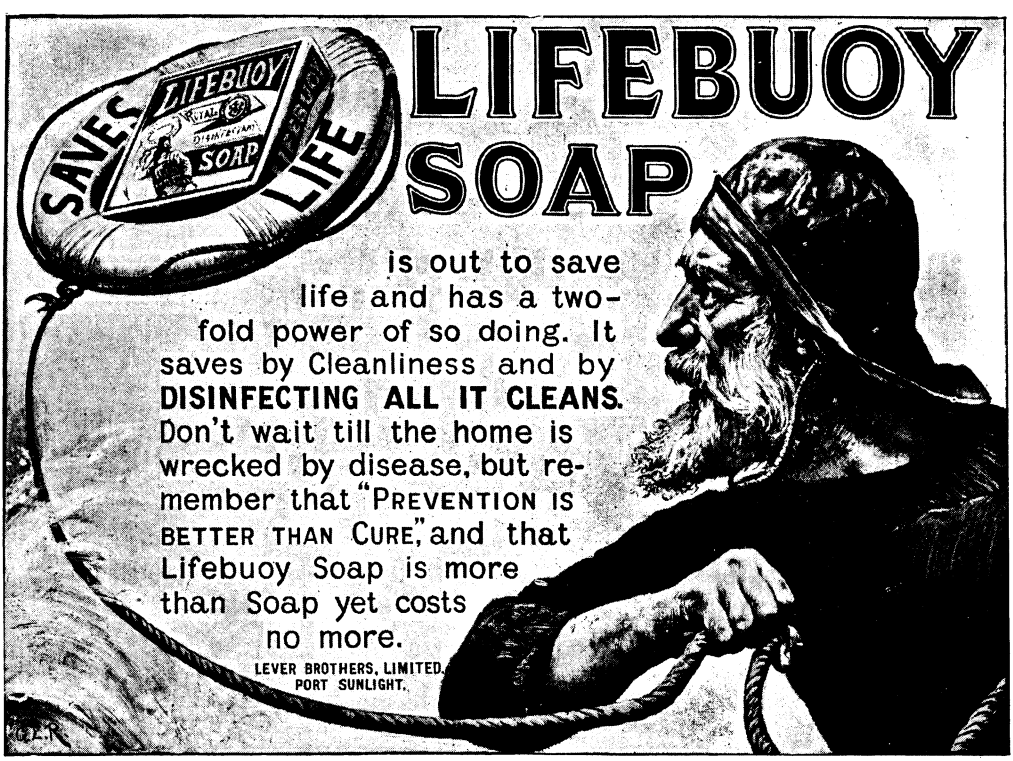
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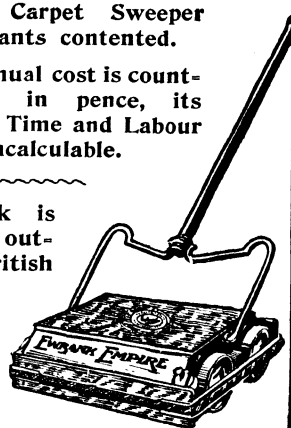
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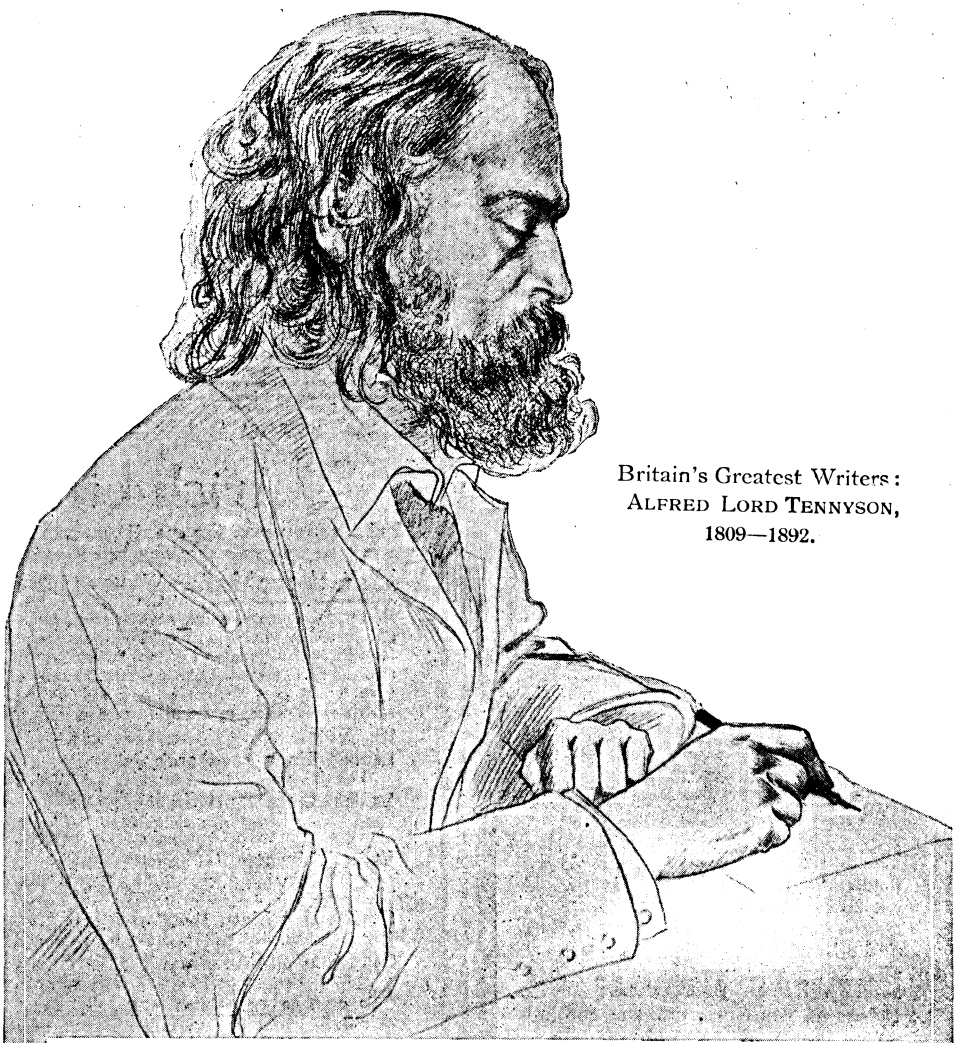
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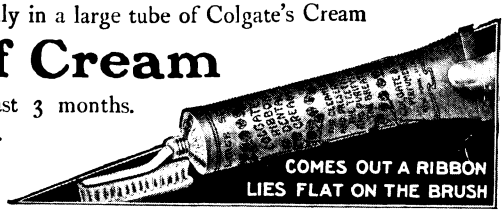
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I meant to write an ode to-day
Or blithe ballade or grave sonnet;
I hoped, at least, a roundelay;
I meant to write an ode to-day,
But here my pen—the runaway—
Has scrawled a trivial triolet.
I meant to write an ode to-day
Or blithe ballade or grave sonnet,

Elizabeth B. Piercy.

SYMPATHETIC LITTLE BOY: You're awfully tired of keeping house, aren't you, mother?

MOTHER: Yes, dear.

SYMPATHETIC LITTLE BOY: But there isn't even much use in dying and going to heaven, is there? 'Cause you'd have a mansion on your hands then.

ISAACS (who has just recovered from typhoid): Doctor, you have charged me for four weeks' calls; I will pay for only three weeks!

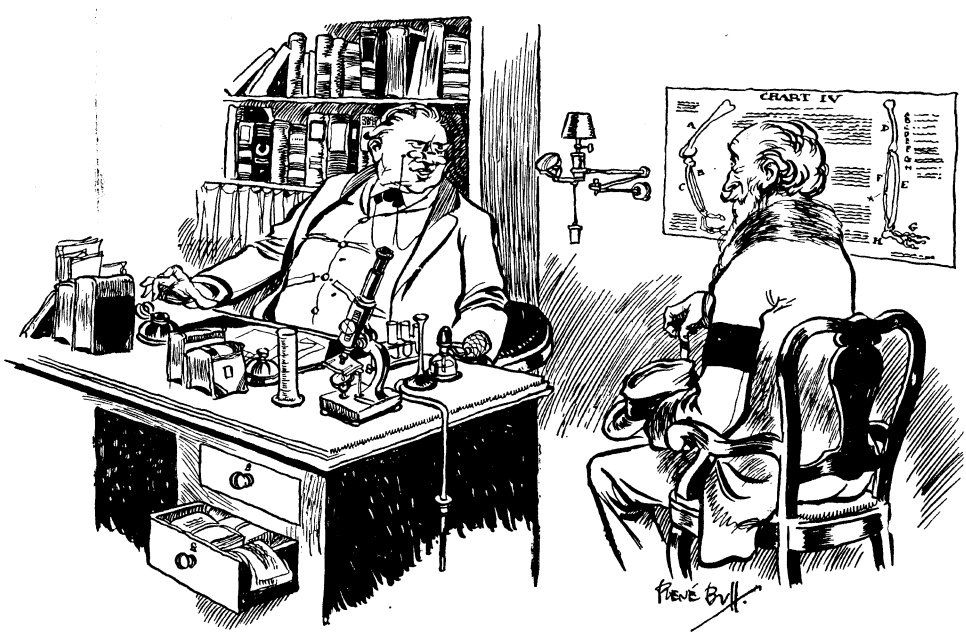
DOCTOR: But I called on you every day for four weeks, Mr. Isaacs!

ISAACS: Well, there was one week I was delirious and I didn't see you come in!

TO CLARISSA

(A Young Lady with an Autograph Book).

Are the wonderings of your mind,
Womankind,
Rather muddled, as I find,
Unassigned?
You are sweet as you are fair,
Blown about from here to there,
Blown by every trembling air
Of the wind.



"TRUTH WILL OUT!"

"YOU'RE a long time curing me, doctor!"
DOCTOR (absent-mindedly): "Yes. Business is frightfully bad."

"WHY do you always say that you are fond of classical music, when you know you don't care a rap for it?" we asked of our friend.

"Because," he answered, "when they ask me if I appreciate it and I say I do, that ends the discussion. Otherwise they bore me to death with efforts to educate me up to an appreciation of the stuff."

JONES: Whenever I have to borrow money, I try to get it from a pessimist.

BROWN: Why?

JONES: A pessimist never expects to get it back.

When you meet me with a smile,
Full of guile,
And you praise my lyric style,
For a while;
Then I rashly take my pen,
And I scribble eight or ten
Lines that literary men
Would revile.

hese I dedicate to you,
As your due;
Though the metre isn't new,
It is true.
But I'm striving for the prize
Of your dear, delicious eyes,
That are fairer than the skies
And as blue.

Geoffrey Besant.

WONDERFUL CHANGE EFFECTED BY ANTIPON

Beauty of Form Entirely Recovered.

Apart from its unique power as a permanent reducer of weight to normal, Antipon owes a great deal of its extraordinary success to the recommendation of conscientious chemists. Doctors and nurses are also warm advocates of this pleasant and entirely harmless remedy for obesity in all its stages. Everyone likes to be able to recommend a good thing, and Antipon is truly supreme in its wonderful efficacy. The following is an extract from the report of a trained nurse residing at Harleston:—"I have been using Antipon in the case of a young girl only 18, and weighing just over 12 stone; but thanks to Antipon she has now attained her normal weight. I procured two more bottles from our chemist since writing to you, and as she (the patient) is much thinner, shall not require any more." Satisfactory reports of a similar character are constantly reaching the head offices of the Antipon Company, where they may be examined in proof of *bona-fides* by anyone desirous of doing so.

It can never be too frequently repeated that the Antipon treatment is not one of the questionable treatments, which rely more or less on mineral drugging and sweating exercises as a means of bringing down weight; nor are any unpleasant food restrictions tolerated. The general tonic effect of



IN THE CHEMIST'S SHOP.

CHEMIST (to Stout Lady): "I can positively assure you, Madam, that Antipon will *permanently* reduce your weight to normal."

Antipon is very marked, especially on the alimentary system; the subject takes his, or her, food with appetite and enjoyment, and digestion is greatly improved. The excellent result of this ample nourishment is obvious; the blood becomes rich and pure, the muscular fibre is replenished, and the limbs become firm and shapely and strong. The complexion is once more clear and healthy.

Antipon takes away the superabundant fatty tissue wherever accumulated, not alone from the abdominal region. Every contour is rebeautified—reduced to correct proportions—waist, hips, bust, shoulders, neck, chin, and cheeks—all regain true beauty of line without an added wrinkle, for the skin is tonically acted upon by Antipon, thus preventing bagginess or flaccidity.

Antipon reduces weight from the very beginning of the treatment—something between 8 oz. and 3 lb. within a day and a night, according to the more or less obese state of the patient. Then every succeeding dose contributes to the rebeautifying process, and, with the complete recovery of normal weight, the doses may cease. The cure is lasting, and for this reason: Antipon not only removes the superabundant adipose tissue from every part, but it also effectually puts an end to the disease of obesity, which is neither more nor less than that terribly



A FEW WEEKS LATER.

GRATIFIED CUSTOMER: "I have found Antipon simply marvellous, and am sure that another bottle will more than suffice. I am extremely grateful both to you and to Antipon."

stubborn tendency to get heavier and heavier without any really accountable cause. That tendency destroyed, the cure must, of course, be permanent, and there is no reason to deny oneself the rational pleasures of the table, etc.

Antipon does sovereign good in clearing the deposits of internal super-fat that hamper the vital organs in this important work. That is why every dose of Antipon is a step towards the recovery of robust health, as well as of the beauty of form so keenly desired. People who get into a neglected condition of chronic obesity do not reach the full span of years which should be the lot of every healthy human being. Let such imprudent ones take Antipon ere it is too late. Advancing years are not deterrent to the perfect efficacy of Antipon.

Antipon is very pleasant to take, containing only quite harmless vegetable ingredients in solution. It has no unwelcome after-effects.

Antipon is sold in bottles, price 2*s.* 6*d.* and 4*s.* 6*d.*, by Chemists, Stores, etc.; or, in the event of difficulty, may be had (on remitting amount), carriage paid, privately packed, direct from the Antipon Company, Olmar Street, London, S.E.

PROVERBS OF PRUDENCE.

Answer no fool
Like unto his folly.
Make it a rule
Answer no fool,
Always keep cool,
Reply's melancholy.
Answer no fool
Like unto his folly.

Be cool and collected
Should danger occur,
Be quite unaffected,
Be cool and collected;
But if you detected
A dynamiter
Be cool (not collected)
Should danger occur.

E. F. Allnutt.

TEACHER: Define a nation?
PUPIL: A nation is a body of people entirely surrounded by politicians.

IT isn't marriage that is a failure, but the man or wife, generally both.



NATIVE TACT.

JOAN (rather plump): The car leans a good deal to your side, dear.
JOYCE (ditto): Oh, no! To *yours*, dear!
JOAN: Which way does the car lean, Pat?
PAT: Faith, then, ladies, I'd say she lanes both ways!

LAST Bank Holiday at Hampstead Heath, a man was seen looking angrily at the whimpering child he was holding by the hand, and was heard to exclaim—

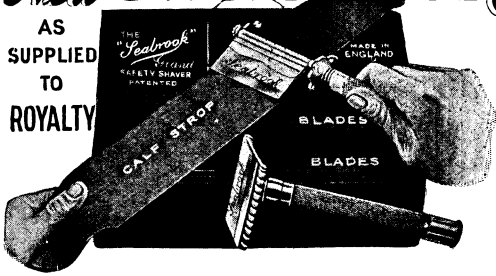
"Got the toothache, 'ave yer? Want to go 'ome, do yer? Well, I've brought you 'ere to enjoy yourself, and enjoy yourself you *shall*, you little varmint!"

"Oh, I can't thread this needle, ma!"
Was little Susie's cry;
"Just as the thread is going through,
The needle winks its eye!"

DOCTOR: Have you any last wish?
PATIENT: Yes. I wish I had some other doctor.

The New Seabrook Safety Shaver Self-Stropping

AS SUPPLIED TO ROYALTY



Is superseding all other makes.

British Made and British Guaranteed.

The BLADES are the great feature in the Seabrook, being HOLLOW-GROUND, each GROUND by HAND. Thin wafer blades turned out in quantities by machinery sometimes sold with safety razors are useless in our opinion for heavy work; further, **they cannot be sharpened**, and you run out of them at the most inconvenient time, besides being a continual expense. A customer writes: "I am getting tired of the expense of new blades." Do not be put off, for the sake of extra profit, on to another make—have a Seabrook *or none*. **SEABROOK GRAND**, with automatic stropper which a novice can use, **7 HOLLOW GROUND BLADES**, (not wafer steel), and calf strop, in presentation case, **12/6**, post 3*d*.; cheaper model, without stropper and strop, 6/-, post 2*d*.; cheapest, 2/6, post 2*d*.

Send for Booklet. Be sure to mention this magazine.

SEABROOK BROS. (To avoid delay, put **Dept. S**) **32, 33, 34, Featherstone St., London, E.C.**



For Artistic Needlework 'OSOSILKIE'

is a new thread of the most beautiful brilliancy. **Looks like Silk at a fifth part of the cost. Will wash equal to Silk**, and retains its lustre. In three sizes, "Fine," "Medium," "Fancy Twine" in a lovely range of shades. Also White and Cream in six sizes from Extra Extra Fine to Extra Stout. **Ask your Draper** or Art Needlework Stores for this beautiful lustrous yarn, also for full particulars of

9th Grand Prize Competition, £125 Cash Prizes.

If cannot procure send 6d. and we will send you post free set of small samples, beautiful Shade Card showing 150 colours, and name of stockholder.

TUBBS, HISCOCKS & CO., Ltd. (Dept. 165), **16-22, Milton Street, E.C.**



THE GRACEFUL GIRL

She studies graceful Styles of Dressing.
And does not scruple at confessing
She keeps her garments nice and smart
By recourse to the Dyer's art.

LADIES' DRESSES FRENCH CLEANED, from **3/6.**
DYED, from **4/6.**

Return Carriage Paid on all post parcels.

Write for Booklet:—"HOW TO KEEP OLD FRIENDS." Sent Free

THE PAISLEY DYE WORKS.

Send Parcels or Inquiries—

GIBSON & REID (I Dept.), PAISLEY, N.B.

"VASELINE"
HAIR TONIC.
LETS THE HAIR GROW.

THAT'S the secret of its marvellous success. It **lets** the hair grow. No forcing, no weird massaging, tugging, rending, or other scalp gymnastics need be performed with **"Vaseline" Hair Tonic.** It **lets** the hair grow by removing all obstructions, by killing all harmful germ life. It penetrates the scalp and gets right down to the roots of the choked up follicles, and frees the tender hair, so that it can fight through.

"Vaseline" Hair Tonic is unlike any other preparation offered for the hair. It is a real hair fertiliser, and is to the hair what sunlight is to plant life. It is both a skin and hair food.

"Vaseline" Hair Tonic is a liquid preparation of Petroleum, delicately perfumed, and is absolutely safe under all circumstances. It is the Best Hair Tonic because it removes the actual source of trouble in the scalp, and **lets** the hair grow. Sold in bottles. Prices **1/-, 2/-,** and **3/-** per bottle. If not obtainable locally, a trial bottle will be sent, Post Free, to any address in the United Kingdom upon receipt of Postal Order.

FREE.—A descriptive pamphlet, explaining the uses of all the "Vaseline" Preparations, will be sent post free on application.

The Word "VASELINE" is the Registered Trade Mark of the

CHESEBROUGH MANUFACTURING CO.,

42, Holborn Viaduct, LONDON, E.C.

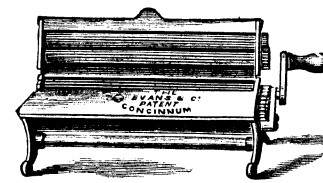
BLUSHING.

Remarkable discovery that will interest every man and woman suffering from involuntary Blushing.

EFFECTIVE TREATMENT THAT PERMANENTLY REMOVES THE CAUSE.

Men and women who suffer from involuntary blushing need no longer despair. Out of a mass of failures has come a genuine success. Their self-consciousness can be so thoroughly removed that they themselves will wonder if they ever really had this embarrassing complaint. Mr. K. S. Temple is the scientist who has formulated this marvellous home method that cures to stay cured. The treatment he prescribes goes to the very root of the disease, and cures it, so that the frequent blushing and flushing becomes a thing of the past. Mr. K. S. Temple wishes it understood that his method of cure is different entirely to the many others which have given only temporary relief. This new method is a simple home treatment that members of either sex can easily follow to a perfectly satisfactory issue, *i.e.*, a permanent cure. By sending your name and address, and enclosing stamp to pay postage, to **Mr. K. S. TEMPLE (Specialist), 8, Blenheim St., Bond St., London, W.,** you will receive full description of this remarkable method which will enable men and women, previously nervous and shy, now to take their places in Society with pleasure and ease, and get greater profit from their business. The description is posted to you free, in a perfectly plain sealed envelope, and you should have no hesitancy in writing. You will be delighted to learn how easily you can be permanently relieved of blushing and flushing of the face and neck, and it will pay you to write to-day; don't neglect to do so.

FREE.



There are Cigarette Machines and Cigarette Machines, but

EVANS' CONCINNUM

HOLDS THE FIELD.

Devised by BRITISH BRAINS and made by BRITISH LABOUR, it has penetrated every quarter of the earth.

The LITTLE DON is the very latest adaptation of the original patent pocket machine, and will be found indispensable for the Smoking-Room Table.

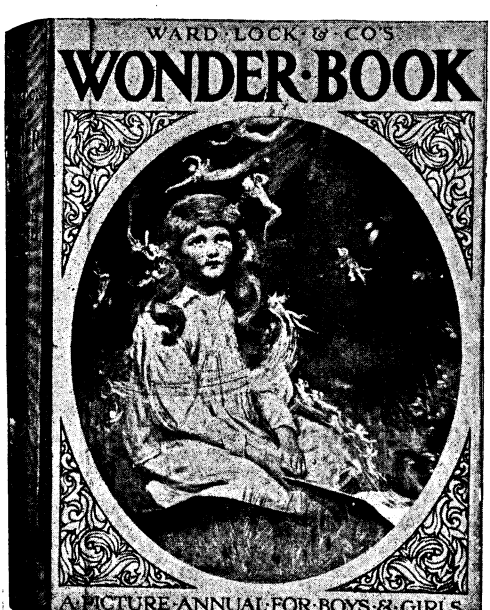
If you wish to enjoy your cigarette, make it yourself, with your own tobacco, and with your own **LITTLE DON** Machine.

Price 5/- post free, with 500 Cigarette Papers.
Foreign orders 6*d.* extra.

Of all Tobacconists, or from the Sole Maker and Patentee,

J. EVANS, 85a, Lillington St., London, S.W.

WARD, LOCK & CO.'S WONDER BOOK



A Picture Annual for Boys and Girls.

SIXTH YEAR OF ISSUE.

Crown 4to, Picture Boards, 3s. 6d.
In handsome Cloth Gilt Binding, 5s.
Twelve Coloured Plates. 264 Pages.
300 Illustrations.

FROM the first issue of this favourite Annual the constant aim has been to present for the delight and entertainment of the little ones THE BEST, AND ONLY THE BEST, in picture, verse and story. The TWELVE COLOURED PLATES are dainty works of art, many of which have graced the walls of the Royal Academy and other famous exhibitions. The full-page and other tinted drawings in the text number nearly THREE HUNDRED, making the volume the most sumptuous gift book for children issued at a moderate price.

The stories and verses—all by favourite writers—include fairy tales, incidents of home and school life, stories of birds and animals, adventures by land and sea, quaint rhymes and jingles, and they have the rare merit of appealing to children of all ages and conditions. By the common consent of thousands of children at home and abroad there is no present for the birthday or for Christmas to equal the WONDER BOOK.

WARD, LOCK & CO., LIMITED, SALISBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.

FOR

those who can play

those who would play

those who could play

THE PIANO



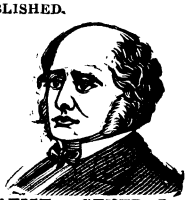
Macdonald Smith's well-known "Brain to Keyboard" System, dispensing with all keyboard drudgery, is a necessity. Lessons by post. R. MACDONALD SMITH, 19a, Bloomsbury Square, W.C.

MANHOOD!

How lost, How regained.

SHOULD BE READ BY ALL YOUNG AND MIDDLE-AGED MEN, BEING THE FIRST AND ONLY AUTHENTIC WORK PUBLISHED.





KNOW THYSELF.

A CLOTH BOUND TREATISE on GENERAL DEBILITY MENTAL DEPRESSION, LOST VIGOUR and VITALITY, PREMATURE DECLINE, and most DISEASES OF MAN, their CAUSE and CURE.

Was the first book of its kind offered to the Public, and to WEAK MEN will teach them how to take their place amongst those who by manly capabilities have been more fortunately favoured. Remarks on how to regain and retain the powers to advanced age, the best means of restoring brain fag, impaired memory, incapacity for study or business and allied weakness, to the married and those about to marry its teachings are invaluable, guarding them against the evils to which the inexperienced are liable, **INSTRUCTS YOU**, and is the only original work published. Sent in plain cover sealed, postage paid to any address for 5 penny stamps.

Write GOULD'S LABORATORY, BRADFORD.

Copyright] [Name this Paper.

THE FAMOUS



"Mab" Dwarf Razor

The description given of the little "Mab" as the finest shaving implement in the world is confirmed in thousands of testimonials.

Black Handle.. .. 2s. 6d.
Ivory Handle.. .. 3s. 6d.

The "MAB" SAFETY RAZOR

with extra blade.

Price 3/6.

Safety razors with a number of inferior blades are of little value, but perfection is attained when fitted with the famous "Mab" hollow-ground blades.

"MAB" CO.,
Newhall St., Birmingham

HAIR GROWTH



Promoted by

CUTICURA SOAP

Assisted by Cuticura

Depots: London, 27, Charterhouse Sq.; Paris, 10, Rue de la Chaussee d'Antin; Australia, R. Towns & Co., Sydney; India, B. K. Paul, Calcutta; China, Hong Kong Drug Co.; Japan, Z. P. Maruya, Ltd., Tokio; So. Africa, Lennon, Ltd., Cape Town, etc.; U.S.A., Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., Sole Props., 133 Columbus Ave., Boston. Post-free, 32-page Cuticura Book, an Authority on the Care and Treatment of Skin and Hair.

WITH A SUPERBLY ILLUSTRATED

Christmas Double Number

which contains, in lavish array,

THE NEW STORIES OF THE GREAT NOVELISTS

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE

breaks new ground, and sets a higher standard in magazine enterprise than has ever been reached before for total bulk, infinite variety and splendid value of contents. For within the handsome coloured covers of this one issue is to be found the latest work of all the following distinguished novelists :—

A. E. W. MASON	**JUSTUS MILES FORMAN**
Mrs. THURSTON	**EDEN PHILLPOTTS**
W. B. MAXWELL	**W. J. LOCKE**
CUTCLIFFE HYNE	**ROBERT BARR**
Mrs. F. A. STEEL	**BARRY PAIN**

and other famous novelists and acknowledged masters of the art of the short story. The new serial feature which is here inaugurated is a new romantic story by

JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

of which the opening chapters are sufficient to give promise of a new drama with emotional interest quite as strong as that of the author's notable successful **WINDSOR** serials, "The Garden of Lies" and "The Quest." This wealth of fiction by famous novelists is finely illustrated by some of the most accomplished of contemporary black-and-white artists. Pictorially the number will contain new features of exceptional interest, including no fewer than

15 COLOURED PLATES 15

and a special section, printed on art paper, of

21 ADMIRABLE REPRODUCTIONS

of Pictures on Sacred Themes

There will also be a valuable series of

14 FINE-ART PLATES

reproduced from the

PICTURES OF MR. W. DENDY SADLER

selected from the works of that popular artist which have not previously been reproduced in the WINDSOR. Four of these favourite pictures will be given as

4 COLOURED FACSIMILE PLATES 4

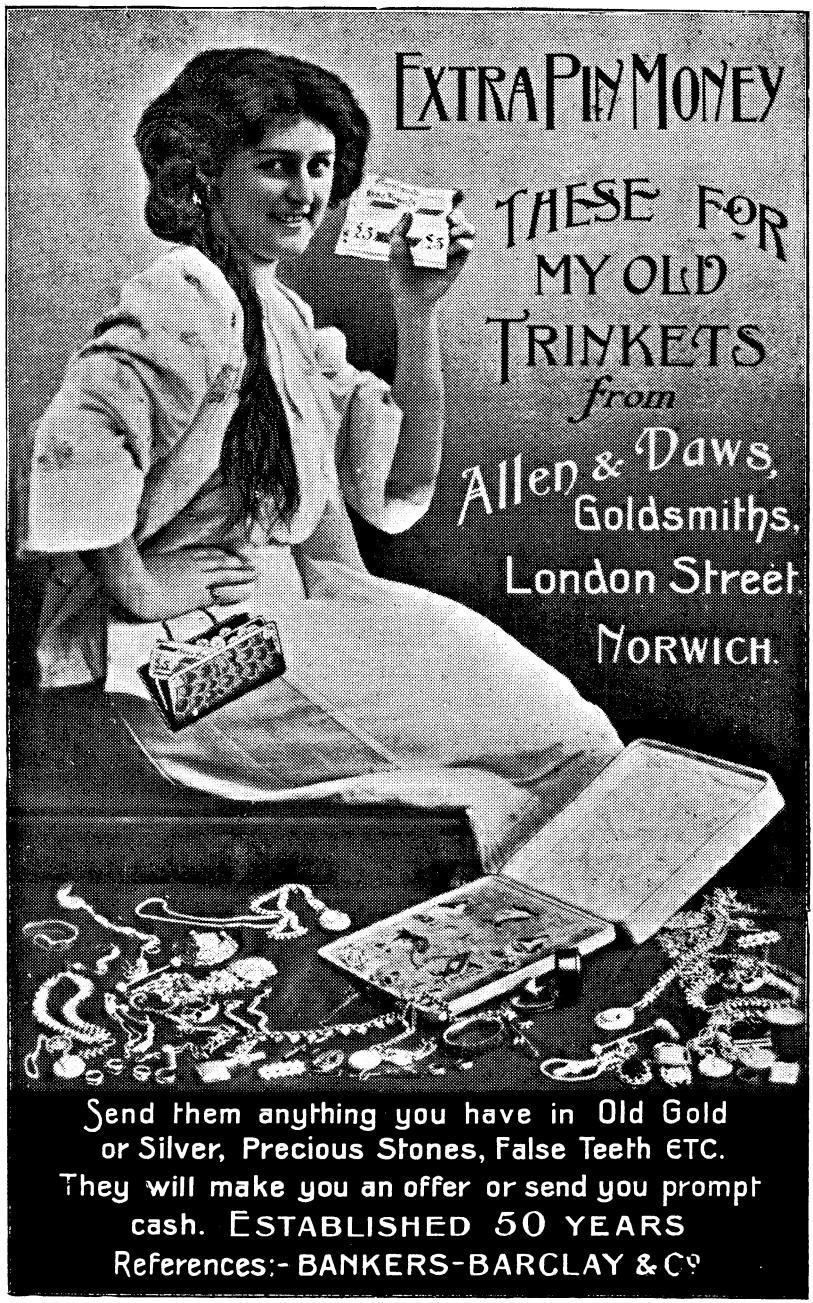
from the original paintings, and the rest will be reduced replicas from the enormously popular etchings and engravings.

Another article that will be lavishly illustrated by THE BEST MODERN COLOUR-PRINTING is an interesting survey of the SEASONS OF THE YEAR as seen in COUNTRY LIFE and RURAL INDUSTRIES.

Many other valuable articles and entertaining stories help to complete

A RECORD DOUBLE NUMBER.

To face Third Cover.]



Send them anything you have in Old Gold or Silver, Precious Stones, False Teeth ETC. They will make you an offer or send you prompt cash. ESTABLISHED 50 YEARS

References:- BANKERS-BARCLAY & Co

Reprint from the London "Standard," 24th June, 1969.

SIXTY YEARS IN NORWICH.

FOR over half a century the house of Allen & Daws has been established as goldsmiths in the historic city of Norwich, and the record which the firm possesses of more than sixty years' trading makes it one of the oldest, as well as one of the largest, in the Eastern Counties. Messrs. Allen & Daws are renowned for the very high class business they have conducted for so long. Their aim during their lengthy and honourable career has been to sell none but jewellery, gems, precious stones, plate, watches, and everything pertaining to the profession of gold and silversmiths, of the finest quality, consistent with the most moderate prices.

If the old house has a speciality, it is in rare gems and all precious stones, and in engagement and fine gem rings. They possess a stock of wonderful variety. In silver plate they have a very wide connection, and an immense stock. Their long experience is a great asset, and they have special facilities for purchasing the finest gems which few retailers can approach. They are always willing to send on approbation to responsible people samples of their jewellery and plate, and can forward a selection on approval to any address, whatever the distance may be.

Recently the firm of Allen & Daws have developed an important branch of their operations by specialising in the buying of old gold jewellery, for which they are prepared to pay good prices. Every day they receive parcels from all parts of the British Isles, containing old disused jewellery and silver goods of every description, for which the owners desire an offer. Such parcels can be entrusted to Messrs. Allen & Daws with every confidence, and in the event of the offer they make not being accepted the articles are immediately returned intact.

As the firm buys anything, whether large or small, many people with jewellery, trinkets, plate, etc., may be glad to know of a reliable house to which such articles can be submitted for sale. They are open to buy such items as old brooches, boxes, eardrops, diamond jewellery, old snuff boxes, false teeth, sterling silver, and Sheffield plate, gold watches, platinum, etc., and are prepared to give intending sellers the highest references, including their bankers, Messrs. Barclay & Co.

Please Take One.

How to make Good Coffee

FIRST SEE THIS LABEL ON YOUR TIN.



Coffee in Perfection

THERE is no real difficulty about making perfect Coffee—the best the World can give, provided your Coffee is absolutely pure. ¶ "FAZENDA" Coffee is fresh from the plantations of sunny San Paulo, one of the principal States of Brazil, and in order that you may always be sure of the Coffee's purity, each tin bears the official seal and guarantee of the Government of San Paulo. "FAZENDA" Pure Coffee is the most economical to use because you get a better all-round result at a reasonable cost—rich, fragrant Coffee that is beneficial and delightful to the last drop in the cup. Pure Coffee is a help to the health of both body and brain. To use such Coffee every day means greater physical activity, brighter brains, better work, a keener zest to life. ¶ Pure Coffee helps the digestion of all foods, and assists them to yield up their nutriment for the sustenance of the whole system. You may always rely upon "FAZENDA" being fresh and retaining all its fine fragrance and flavour, because it is packed in hermetically sealed tins in London, under the personal supervision of a special resident representative of the San Paulo Government.

Ground or Whole Berry, 8D. Per ½-LB. TIN,

of all Grocers.

Method in Making

"FAZENDA" Pure Coffee lends itself admirably to all the ordinary methods of making. It may be used for the many purposes of luxurious preparation, either as the French "Demi Tasse," the German "Schwartzkaffee" or the Austrian "Wienerkaffee." But for the ordinary Coffee there is no easier or better way than the following

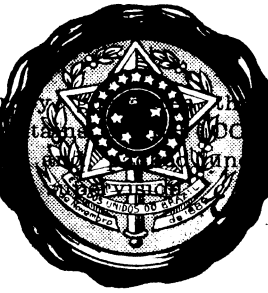
METHOD

Put not less than two heaped-up tablespoonfuls of "FAZENDA" Ground Coffee into an earthenware jug which has been heated, and have ready at hand a pint of freshly boiled water. Pour half the water on to the Coffee, **stir well for about half-a-minute,** and then add the remaining half of the boiling water. Let the brew stand for four minutes, by which time the grounds will have sunk to the bottom of the jug, and serve for use.

"FAZENDA" Coffee, black or with milk, should always be served hot.

Bear in mind the simple direction that the water must be fresh and freshly boiling. In water that has boiled for a long time, important mineral salts, which help to bring out flavour and fragrance, have been neutralized.

"A drink called Coffee. This drink comforteth the brain and heart and helpeth digestion." —BACON



I he[illegible] this tin [illegible]EE roast[illegible] perso[illegible]

DELEGATE OF THE SAN PAULO GOVERNMENT

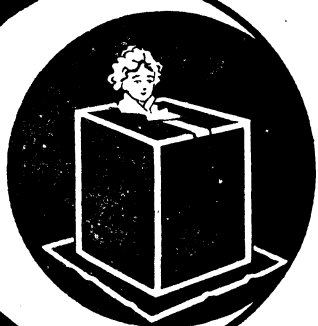
THIS SEAL AS GUARANTEE OF PURITY APPEARS ON EVERY TIN OF "FAZENDA" COFFEE.

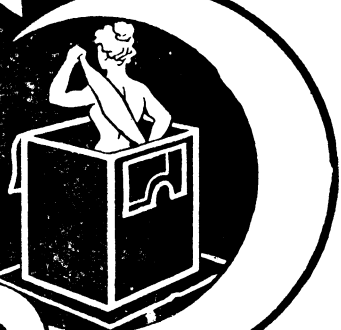
REMEMBER "FAZENDA,"

The Coffee with a Government Guarantee.

The GEM TURKISH BATH CABINET.







NO POWDER, PILL, or POTION.

A few words by the Turkish Bath Man.

The Turkish Bath Man Talks to You.

I AM a very modest man of retiring disposition, though you may not think it. It required great effort on the part of my friends to get me to write my personal views and experiences of home Turkish Bathing. My advertisements were directed to emphasising the luxury of Turkish Bathing, and the glorious cleanliness which could not be gained in any other way. There was little reference to the cure of disease, as I had no wish to set up my Cabinet as a universal healer. But the pressure of facts is stiffening my backbone. On all sides I learn of benefit received, and I feel that my natural modesty is best set aside if I want to do good to my fellow men; I must trumpet forth boldly and fearlessly the immense, almost miraculous, benefits of Home Thermal Bathing.

I have an intense abhorrence of anything savouring of quackery, but I make no pretence to orthodox medical knowledge. I know little of drugs, medical phraseology, or the diagnosis of disease, but I have a substantial knowledge of a practical method of healing—home Turkish Bathing.

I have seen marvellous cures of so-called incurable diseases. I have known men pronounced incurable by hospital physicians and by local doctors who have regained a fair measure of health. I have friends troubled with rheumatism of long standing who testify that the Turkish Bath has done them more good than any other remedy. I have known one girl crippled with rheumatism, who could not raise a finger to help herself, and at the end of a few months of regular Turkish Bathing was able to dress and do a little housework.

For years a friend of mine was covered with eczema. He tried every so-called remedy; was dosed at more than one hospital and by more than one physician, only to be told finally he was incurable. He then became a vegetarian; the results were good, but the eczema was not cured. He was almost in despair. Baring his arms one day, he showed me what a terrible malady he was cursed with, and said, bitterly: "This is the sins of my forbears—sins of wrong eating and drinking." When I introduced the Bath Cabinet, he was one of the first to buy. He used the Cabinet every night for a month, then every other night for another month, and at the end of that time every vestige of this terrible skin complaint had disappeared. His body was as free from blemish as that of a new-born babe. That is eight years ago, and he has never had eczema since.

Can you realise the intense relief from the torture he had endured? Can you wonder that this man was so enthusiastic he couldn't rest until he had persuaded every one of his acquaintances to purchase and use a Gem Turkish Bath? He wrote me then:

"It gives me great pleasure to inform you that your Bath has cured, without other doctoring of any kind, the complaint of eczema that I have suffered from for many years. It acted like a charm. One has the satisfaction of knowing that the impure matter is drawn out of the system entirely by the use of the Gem Quaker Bath. I can confidently recommend it to any person suffering as I have suffered."

Ensign McCallum, the well-known Hydropathist to the Salvation Army, than whom no man in the kingdom knows more of the value of Turkish Bathing, has an enthusiasm for this treatment not even second to mine. What he does not know of Turkish Bathing is not worth knowing. He has used Home Turkish Baths for very many years. He has cured hundreds of cases of deep-seated disease by this method alone, without potion, pill, or powder. He has cured many obstinate cases of influenza, skin disease, and rheumatism, chiefly by means of the Gem Bath. His pronouncement in favour of Turkish Bathing has no uncertain sound. Of the Gem Bath in particular he wrote some time ago:

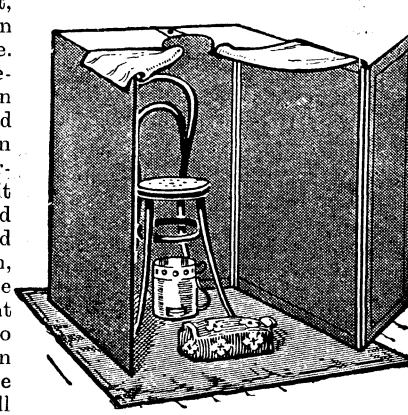
"The Salvation Army,
"International Training Homes,
"Clapton, London, N.E.

"I feel it is my duty, both to yourself and in the interest of the suffering, to write you and say how much benefit has been obtained through the use of the 'Gem' Cabinet Bath. In my position as Chief Hydropathist to this Institution, I am in possession of facts which prove beyond doubt the inestimable value of the Bath. Here, with 300 men, sickness is far less than under the old system with only 100 men; in fact, our health chart has been cleaner the last two years than any of the 20 preceding years under the old system. I may say that there are hundreds of our officers who use the Bath regularly, and who are constantly telling me the great benefit they derive from the same. For influenza, rheumatism, colds, and, in fact, all general symptoms that the human body is subject to, it is invaluable.

"As to the durability of the 'Gem' Cabinet Bath, the fact that we have used our Bath on an average of five times a day for the past two years, and that the Bath is still in a fairly good state of repair, speaks volumes. Perhaps one of its best features is its absolute freedom from danger. Although we use ours so often, we have never had an accident.

"You have my permission to make whatever use you like of this, as I am anxious for every sufferer to know what a wonderful remedy there is within the reach of all. "THOMAS McCALLUM."

I have Cabinets from 30s. to £11 11s. I should make more profit if I sold you a high-priced Cabinet, but that is not my policy. I personally use the 30s. Cabinet. It is the one on which I have built an honest, sterling business; it is the one referred to in almost every one of the testimonials I receive. Therefore I recommend this Cabinet in preference to any of my other Cabinets. It is in every way as effective as the highest-priced Cabinet on the market. With it you can obtain Turkish, Russian, Medicated, or Perfumed Baths. I would not use it myself if it were not satisfactory; I would not recommend it to you if it were not all I claim, for I should lose your custom and your recommendation, and without recommendations it is impossible to build up a remunerative business. I want you to buy my Cabinet, but I also want you to recommend my Cabinet to your friends. When you have tried the Cabinet, and have felt the benefits of Turkish Bathing, I know I shall have your help, for the Bath is all and more than I claim. Only the other day a Brighton gentleman wrote me:—



The 30/- CABINET

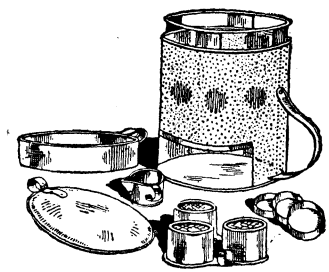
Floor Cloth, 5s. extra.

"I have derived much benefit and enjoyment from the Cabinet you sent me some months ago . . . that . . . I want you to send one of your 30s. Gem Cabinets to an address in Florence, Italy."

This 30s. Cabinet is complete with stove. All you require is about a pennyworth of methylated spirit with which to fill the stove. You set up the Cabinet, place an ordinary kitchen chair inside, put the lighted stove underneath, and arrange a footstool or a bucket of hot water close to the chair. You then step inside with a towel round your neck, close up the top flaps, arrange the towel to prevent the hot air escaping, put the feet on the footstool or in the hot water, and rub the body vigorously. In a few moments you experience a delightful feeling of rest and pleasure, and you are transported as it were, from the depths of an English winter to the balmy climate of southern Italy. The change is something more than a pleasure. While you are luxuriating in this summer warmth, the bath is quietly performing its work, dilating the pores, and sweeping out of the body the accumulated filth which causes disease. And such foul-smelling refuse! None but a Thermal Bather realises the amount of malo-

dorous dirt held by the pores of an inactive skin. The first bath is an invaluable object lesson in personal cleanliness, even to one used to regular hot water and soap bathing.

Already I have sold more than 20,000 Cabinets, but the army of the sick is a mighty one, every year filled with new recruits, wearied almost to death with quackery and shams they have been induced to try from time to time, and it is in the hands of these recruits that I want to put the blessings of thermal bathing. I am willing to send a 30s. Cabinet on receipt of a ten-days' post-dated money order, and if from any reason, after using the Cabinet as often as you like, you are dissatisfied, you can return the Cabinet within that time and have your money refunded. If you are not in a position to avail yourself of this offer, I am prepared to go still further. Send me a postal order for ten shillings and your word that you will pay five instalments monthly of 4s. 6d. each, and I will at once send you a 30s. Cabinet. I don't ask for sureties or references; I will take your word for it and trust you. I have a great faith in the honesty of my fellow-creatures. I don't imagine I am the only honest man in the world. Mankind, in the main, is honest, and I am prepared to trust it. I know if you accept my offer I shall have your everlasting gratitude. You will note that in accepting payments in this way I cannot offer a free trial, and I charge you 32s. 6d. for the Cabinet, but it is worth every penny of it, and it only repays me for any extra cost of bookkeeping, use of capital, &c.



Just think what it means. You can immediately enjoy the benefits of home Turkish bathing for a trifling sum equal to 1s. 3d. a week for six months—just about half the amount you would pay for a single visit to an ordinary Turkish bath establishment. You will have the Cabinet ready at hand for any emergency, and there isn't a man, woman, or child who may not be suddenly stricken with some trouble which, taken at its birth, may be as quickly relieved by this wonderful thermal treatment.

If you are well you want one of my 30s. Cabinets to keep you so; if you are ill you need it still more. A Cabinet would be the best investment you ever made. If you cannot make up your mind at once to buy a Cabinet, don't shelve the matter; it is of vital importance to you and your family. At least, drop me a postcard with your name and address, and let me send you a 100-page book giving very valuable information about thermal bathing, or call at my place and inspect the Cabinet. It is close to the Gas Co.'s Office in Goswell Road.

Postal orders and cheques should be made payable to my Company.

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22 Pear Tree Street, Goswell Rd., London, E.C.

Enclosed find Money Order value 30s., for which send me one 30s. No. 1 Standard Bath Cabinet. This Money Order is sent on the understanding that I am at liberty to return the Cabinet within the next ten days and my Money Order will be returned.

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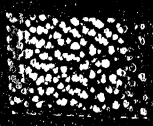


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